



PRESS RELEASE

Bio-Bridge Initiative funding agreement signed to promote technical and scientific cooperation on biodiversity

Montreal, 19 May 2015 – The Republic of Korea and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), with the purpose of promoting technical and scientific co-operation and to support achievement of the goals and targets of the Convention, have today signed a funding agreement for the implementation of the 2015-2020 Bio-Bridge Initiative.

The Bio-Bridge Initiative, launched by the Republic of Korea in 2014 at the margins of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, aims to support developing countries in their efforts to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 19, that “by 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.”

The agreement was signed by the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Mr. Seong-kyu Yoon and the Executive Secretary of the CBD, Mr. Braulio de Ferreira de Souza Dias.

During his visit to the Republic of Korea, Mr. Dias will hold a series of high-level meetings on the leadership initiatives – including Bio-Bridge – that have been established by the Republic of Korea to support the Convention. He will also participate in events being held to commemorate the International Day for Biological Diversity that is celebrated this year under the theme, “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development”.

“Technical and scientific cooperation among its 196 Parties is a critical multilateral element of the Convention,” said Mr. Dias. “By carefully helping to match the needs of Parties with the offers of support by other Parties that have relevant experience, as well as with leading organizations and centres of expertise, the Bio-Bridge Initiative will make a lasting contribution. I invite all Parties and partners to join in this initiative to significantly enhance our efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020.”

Funding for Phase 1 of the Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) comprises an initial investment of more than US\$ 500,000 by the Ministry of Environment of the Government of the Republic of Korea, with five additional contributions for 2016-2020.

The initiative aims to address some of the identified structural deficiencies that will enable more systematic and sustainable technical and scientific cooperation by: facilitating the communication of technical and scientific needs and priorities of countries; enhancing the availability and accessibility of information with respect to best practices and expertise for technical and scientific cooperation, and; matching the needs of countries with support for technical and scientific cooperation by relevant global, regional and national organizations and initiatives.

The BBI will particularly benefit developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are Parties to the Convention, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, and the scientific and technical institutions in these countries. Activities scheduled for Phase 1 include engaging important partners; preparing a detailed 2016-2020 action plan; compiling and validating technical and scientific cooperation needs and offers of support; organizing scoping exercises and



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consultations with Parties, agencies and experts; setting up the basic clearing-house mechanism function of the initiative; developing key partnerships and networks for project delivery, and; identifying candidate pilot projects for Phase 2 (2016-2020).

A funding agreement for the Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative was also signed by the Minister of Environment and the Executive Secretary. This initiative will promote transboundary cooperation in protected areas globally. Through the Peace and Biodiversity Initiative, Parties to the CBD can share knowledge and best practices in transboundary cooperation. They may also wish to strengthen existing cooperation mechanisms or develop new ones with the facilitation of the CBD Secretariat and many partners with expertise in this regard.

The agreements for the Bio-Bridge and Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiatives add to three other agreements that the Republic of Korea has signed with the Secretariat of the CBD as a commitment of critical support to the Convention in view of its Presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The previous three agreements are the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries' support to the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, the Korean Forest Service's support to the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative, and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy's support to the Capacity Building Initiative for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and entered into force in December 1993. The CBD 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 196 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 peoples and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 169 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 60 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int. For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int
