



PRESS RELEASE

New report demonstrates that we are jeopardizing the planet's capacity to sustain a healthy future

Montreal, 16 July 2015 – Though there have been rapid advances in human health, the continuing degradation of our planetary systems does not bode well for its future. Today, The Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission on Planetary Health launched a comprehensive report entitled “Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch” in New York City. This innovative report demonstrates the extent to which human activity is pushing the safe boundaries of our natural systems beyond thresholds required for humanity to continue to thrive and flourish.

Braulio Ferreira De Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and a scientific advisor for the Commission, noted that “we are moving closer than ever before to triggering potentially irreversible impacts, and jeopardizing the health of our ecosystems and that of present and future generations.”

Dr. Dias participated on a panel that included other Commissioners and experts eager to engage in a discussion of the report with audience members in New York City this morning. Welcoming the report, Dr. Dias highlighted its synergy with the State of Knowledge Review ‘Connecting Global Priorities: Biodiversity and Human Health’, a unique collaboration by the World Health Organization and the CBD Secretariat released last month in Brussels.

Dr. Dias noted that these reports signify an urgent call for concerted, coherent, collaborative action to jointly increase the resilience of our ecosystems and planetary system and communities worldwide. The CBD is deeply engaged in this work as many of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted by over 190 countries in 2010 are directly or indirectly related to human health issues.

Dr. Dias was especially pleased that The Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission makes a bold call for the development of a new discipline of “planetary health.” It also suggests a series of practical recommendations that encourage collaboration between the medical, environmental, and other communities and stresses the need to take advantage of related opportunities for positive transformative change. The recommendations include reducing food waste and diversifying diets; protecting nature and biodiversity; building resilient cities; developing more resilient health systems; and making taxes and subsidies conducive for planetary health.

The report of The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission, ‘Safeguarding Human Health in the Anthropocene’ is available at:

<http://www.thelancet.com/commissions/planetary-health>

The WHO-SCBD State of Knowledge Review ‘Connecting Global Priorities Biodiversity and Human Health’ is available at:

<https://www.cbd.int/en/health/stateofknowledge>



Convention on
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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 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 196 Parties up to now, 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, 170 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 62 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
