



CBD

# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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International Day for Biological Diversity



Biodiversity and Climate Change

MESSAGE FROM  
MR. AHMED DJOGLAF, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF  
THE CONVENTION

to the

**INTERNATIONAL EXPERT SEMINAR ON  
INDICATORS RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES,  
THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND  
THE MDGS**  
*Banaue, Ifugao, Philippines*  
*5 March 2007*

I wish to congratulate the Working Group on Indicators of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and in particular, its Chair, Ms. Joji Carino, who has worked tirelessly in organizing this important seminar on the indicators relevant to indigenous peoples and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Also, I also want to thank the Government of Spain for their generous funding of the meeting and the Tebtebba Foundation for facilitating this event.

As we are rapidly approaching the target date of 2010 to reduce significantly the loss of biodiversity, we must fully recognize and value the contribution that traditional knowledge can make to the achievement of the three pillars of the Convention: the conservation of biological diversity, its sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have recognized the symbiosis that exists between the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities and the conservation and sustainable use of life on Earth. They recognized that the survival of species goes hand in hand with the maintenance of traditional knowledge, and that much can be learned from indigenous and local communities in our efforts to ensure the sustainable use of biological diversity and to achieve the ambitious 2010 target, which the international community has set for itself - to reduce by 2010 – and if possible to halt – the dramatic loss of biodiversity.

The active involvement of indigenous peoples around the world is essential in the achievement of the ambitious target.

The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have adopted a framework to measure progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and achievement of the 2010 target, covering seven focal areas, one of which is “protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices”. In each of these focal areas, goals, sub-targets and indicators are being identified. Thus the establishment of indicators for traditional knowledge is vital in the process.

This initiative of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity to assist the Parties in developing indicators is very encouraging in that, through this initiative, the indigenous communities themselves are actively searching for practical ways to advance the protection of traditional knowledge and to contribute to the 2010 biodiversity target.



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The international community has recognized this initiative and indeed the Conference of the Parties has expressed confidence in and supported this practical work that is anticipated to provide the Parties with a handful of meaningful indicators to measure the status and trends in traditional knowledge, relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

I also note that this meeting will also consider indicators for indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals. The role of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as the key international instrument to ensure the integration of biodiversity-related issues into the Millennium Development Agenda has been examined and underscored.

Indigenous peoples often amongst the world's most marginalized and impoverished are further impacted upon disproportionately by environmental stress and climate change - because of their close and traditional associated with their environment.

Addressing the targets of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular goal 1 (combating poverty and hunger), goals 4-6 (reducing infant mortality, improving material health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and goal 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability), calls for commitment and partnership. This has fully engaged the attention of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we must make the two-way, and mutually beneficial, linkage between the Convention and the MDGs. We need to focus the activities under the Convention in the coming years on both achieving the 2010 target and on contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. We believe we must find new, and enhanced, ways to more effectively communicate the importance of biodiversity for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and to identify and communicate the relationship between biodiversity and human development targets at all levels.

Given this, the contribution that this meeting can make to strengthening the link between biodiversity and the achievement of the MDGs is critical and I look forward to receiving the results concerning possible indicators for indigenous peoples regarding the MDGs and understand that these results will also be transmitted to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for their consideration in May.

The work being carried out here this week also provides an opportunity for the world's indigenous peoples to help shape international commitments that will emerge after the 2010 target. To this end, I want to encourage a partnership between the Convention and indigenous peoples to celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity and to highlight indigenous contributions to maintaining biodiversity and providing solutions to the climate change crises.

The Conference of the Parties has recognized that indigenous peoples are highly vulnerable to climate change but more importantly that indigenous peoples, in maintaining healthy ecosystems, can mitigate the effects of climate change. The Convention's Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions will consider a paper that I am preparing on this very issue and will make recommendations to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in an effort to highlight possible contributions of indigenous peoples can make to this global issue.

I wish you every success in your undertakings as we strive towards to achieve the 2010 target and to advance the goals of conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use and the equitable sharing of benefits. I look forward to the results of this meeting, which will be considered by the Working Group on Article 8(j) in October 2007 and by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties when it meets in Bonn, Germany, in May 2008.

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