



Secretariat of the
Convention on Biological Diversity



INTERNATIONAL
DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY
22 May 2008
**BIODIVERSITY
AND AGRICULTURE**

STATEMENT

on behalf of

AHMED DJOGLAF

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

on the occasion of the

24th SESSION

of the

NORTH AMERICAN FORESTRY COMMISSION (NAFC)

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 9-12 June 2008

Please check against delivery



ONE NATURE • ONE WORLD • OUR FUTURE
COP 9 MOP 4 Bonn Germany 2008



United Nations
Environment Programme

413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC H2Y 1N9, Canada

Tel : +1 514 288 2220
Fax : +1 514 288 6588

<http://www.cbd.int>
secretariat@cbd.int

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to convey my greetings to the distinguished participants of this meeting of the North American Forestry Commission.

Forests are at the heart of the some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time; they must also be part of the solution. Last month in Bonn, Germany, almost 5,000 participants gathered for the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The 190 Parties to the Convention reviewed the programme of work on forest biodiversity, which was adopted in 2002, and concluded that efforts for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity must be increased considerably, if we are to achieve the 2010 target of substantially reducing the rate of biodiversity loss.

In particular, in its decision IX/5, the Parties to the Convention stressed the need to more fervently address the threats to forest biodiversity arising from illegal land conversion, forest fires, habitat fragmentation, and invasive alien species. Sustainable management and the ecosystem approach are the cornerstones of this effort. To this end, the programme of work on forest biodiversity provides Parties to the Convention with wide-ranging guidance and advice on how to manage forests sustainably, and how to create the necessary socio-economic enabling conditions for sustainable forest management.

The Conference of the Parties also recognized the important role that regional forest processes and initiatives are playing in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of forests. It therefore requested the Convention Secretariat, in partnership with other international organizations, to support such regional initiatives and processes, where requested through targeted capacity building.

After several decades of progress towards the goal of sustainable forest management, the forest sector has much to contribute to the debate on sustainable development. Today, forest management is no longer the main threat to forest biodiversity; agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, mining, air pollution, invasive species, and climate change have taken its place. As we become more aware of the important role that biodiversity plays in promoting the resilience of forest ecosystems, and of the multitude of environmental goods and services that forests provide, we need to reassess the economic value of forests in relation to other land-uses. Recently, it has been recognized that these services include the sequestration of carbon.

To address some of the interlinkages and conflicts between forestry and other land-uses, the Convention Secretariat has recently published a “Cross-Sectoral Toolkit for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forest Biodiversity” in an effort to support Parties in the implementation of the programme of work. The toolkit was developed to help Parties to understand the importance that decisions and policies in seemingly unrelated sectors, such as energy, will have on the loss of forest biodiversity unless forests are considered in such sectoral policies. This is one example of the work carried out under the Convention on Biological Diversity, in the framework of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

I invite the North American Forestry Commission to work together with the Convention Secretariat, and with the Parties to the Convention, for an enhanced implementation of the Convention’s programme of work on forest biodiversity, in view of the 2010 target.

In this spirit, I wish your meeting every success and thank you for your attention.
