



MESSAGE

from

**Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary,
Convention on Biological Diversity**

on the occasion of the

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October 2009 – *Children and Families Speak out against Poverty*

The Convention on Biological Diversity is a major legal instrument in support to achieving the objective of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Biodiversity provides the ecosystem based goods and services essential for the eradication of poverty and is integral to key development sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, which more than 1.3 billion poor people depend on for their livelihoods.

Seventy per cent of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend directly on biological resources for as much as 90 per cent of their needs—such as food, fuel, medicine, shelter and transportation. Therefore, the impact of environmental degradation is most severe among the rural population living in poverty as they have few livelihood options. In contrast, any effort to conserve biodiversity has the potential to enhance supply of food and income to rural households positively impacting their well being.

Hence, the Johannesburg biodiversity target was integrated in 2006 as part of goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals. Subsequently, the Convention Secretariat, in partnership with France, Germany, Japan and the United Nations Development Programme, launched its initiative on biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation. It is also for this reason that the 193 Parties to the Convention and their partners will celebrate the 2010 International Day for Biological Diversity under the theme “Biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation”.

2010 coincides with the celebration of the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Aichi-Nagoya in Japan. The meeting will be preceded in September 2010 by a high level meeting during the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly exclusively devoted to biodiversity and with the participation of heads of State and government. The question of biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation will be discussed at the New York Biodiversity Summit as a contribution to the 10-year review of the Millennium Declaration.

At the Aichi-Nagoya Biodiversity Summit a long-term vision and a short-term target will be adopted which will be integrated into a new Strategic Plan for the Convention for the period 2011-2020. The new Strategic Plan will include the role of biodiversity in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.



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Life in harmony, into the future

This year's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is being celebrated under the theme *Children and Families Speak out against Poverty*. Investing in children's education is one of the main objectives of the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity as they are the future caretakers of our biodiversity. By educating the young about biological diversity, and the importance of preserving it for our well-being and that of our planet, we ensure that future generations will grow up as caring stewards of our natural resources.

It is for this reason that the Secretariat launched in 2008 *The Green Wave* campaign aimed at mobilizing the children of today, the leaders of tomorrow, to protect their future by protecting biodiversity (www.greenwave.cbd.int). *The Green Wave* campaign in 2010, which coincides with the celebration of the International Day of Biodiversity, will significantly contribute to a better understanding of the role biodiversity plays in development and poverty alleviation. I call on the children of the world to join the *The Green Wave* campaign for 2010 and make their voices heard at the Aichi-Nagoya Biodiversity Summit. Moreover, these impacts will be felt most acutely by future generations.

Montreal, 16 October 2009