



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



OPENING REMARKS BY

MR. AHMED DJOGLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

**ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING
REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS FOR
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

**9-10 FEBRUARY 2010
ISLE OF VILM, GERMANY**



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いのちの共生を、未来へ
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the CBD Secretariat and its Executive Secretary, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the regional consultations for Central and Eastern European countries in support of the finalization of the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing.

The CBD Secretariat is very pleased to have contributed to the organization of this regional consultation. I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and the United Nations Environment Programme for providing the funds and the resources necessary for this meeting to take place. I also wish to acknowledge the work done by Ms. Andrea Strauss, Ms. Gisela Stolpe and other BfN staff involved in the organisation of this event in collaboration with the COP 9 Bureau Members for the region, Ms. Snezana Prokic from Serbia and Mr. Volodymyr Domashlinets from Ukraine. Finally, I wish to thank the Government of Germany for the very warm hospitality and welcome extended to all participants.

We are certainly most privileged that the consultation is being held on the Isle of Vilm, one of the most beautiful and tranquil areas of Germany. The Isle of Vilm is a gem of the Baltic Sea coast and its early designation as a protected area has kept most of its beauty intact. Vilm is also the headquarters of the International Academy for Nature Conservation, which works hard at providing solutions to help resolve conservation issues in Germany and around the world. I am certain that their experience in leading environmental debates provides a good stage for us to have fruitful discussions on ABS during this meeting.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A new era for the Convention dawned with the start of the New Year. Indeed, 2010 has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Year of Biodiversity. The International Year of Biodiversity and the UN General Assembly's High Level Segment 20-22 September 2010, offer a unique opportunity to elevate biodiversity to the highest levels of the political agenda and to raise awareness amongst the peoples of the world of the critical importance of conserving and sustainably biodiversity. The IYB's Facebook page – already with over 19,436 friends – shows the enormous potential of the International Year of Biodiversity to raise awareness about biodiversity globally.

One of the highlights of IYB will be the conclusion of the International Regime, which will be adopted in Nagoya, next October. This meeting is an essential step on the road to Nagoya.

The ABS Working Group met last in November 2009, in Montreal, Canada. Participants characterized it as a very constructive meeting, carried out in a very positive atmosphere of cooperation and compromise. The Working Group made significant progress by producing - for the very first time - a single negotiating text incorporating all the elements of the International Regime. Progress was also made on the nature of the International Regime.

This meeting takes places only five weeks before the Working Group's next and last negotiating session. With the process reaching its final stage, time is of the essence, and it is crucial that the region take full advantage of this meeting to refine its negotiating positions.

You may wish to identify the issues that are of prime importance for the region and go beyond that by taking note of the outcomes of the other regional group meetings while trying to identify possible compromise solutions to the most difficult items. Indeed, the negotiations are

reaching the final stage and time has come for the regional groups to consider each other's positions and find compromise approaches. This is very demanding. But it is the only approach capable of delivering the International Regime in Nagoya, next October.

In short, the time for advancing one's position has passed. Now is the time to engage in frank and open discussions and to move forward through compromise. This is the only way to achieve our common objective. This meeting provides a unique opportunity for the CEE region to prepare for the "give and take" process that must take place in Colombia next month.

As part of the inter-sessional work announced by the Co-Chairs, an informal inter-regional consultation will take place prior to the ninth meeting of the ABS Working Group, from 16 to 18 March, in Colombia. To this end, you may wish to take the opportunity of this meeting to work towards designating the five CEE representatives and three advisors to the inter-regional informal consultations.

As always, the CBD Secretariat stands ready to assist you in this process. I wish you a very successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.
