



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

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*on the occasion of the opening of*

**The Sixth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic  
Resources for Food and Agriculture**

**5 October 2015**

**Rome, Italy**



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

I wish to thank you for this opportunity to address the Sixth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and offer my sincere regrets that competing obligations made it impossible for me to join you in person.

The two years since the previous session of the Governing Body have been very fruitful and the relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Treaty has continued to grow and deepen.

Much of our cooperation has focused on the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing. As you know, the **Nagoya Protocol** was adopted in 2010 to further the third objective of the Convention regarding access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use. We were very pleased when the Protocol entered into force nearly one year ago, on 12 October 2014, allowing the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to be held concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in the Republic of Korea. The information document we have submitted to this meeting illustrates that the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol was very productive and adopted thirteen decisions on diverse issues such as capacity-building, compliance, awareness-raising and the ABS Clearing-House.

The momentum of the Nagoya Protocol continues to build. The Protocol now has 64 Parties with more ratifications expected in the coming weeks and months as countries finalize their national processes.

Of course, for those countries that are Parties to both the Protocol and the Treaty, implementation needs to be done in a mutually supportive manner. To this end, our two Secretariats are **collaborating with Bioversity International and the ABS Capacity Development Initiative** in order to increase the ability of national policy makers to implement both agreements in supportive ways. Together, we are undertaking a number of activities to identify clear, operable approaches to address the challenges of implementing these two instruments together.

Colleagues,

The CBD Secretariat has been following with interest the discussions on the enhancement of the functioning of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing. I recall that the Treaty provides that its Multilateral System covers the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture listed in Annex I to the Treaty, established according to criteria of food security and interdependence. I trust that the solution you will find to enhance the functioning of the MLS will facilitate the relationship between our respective instruments rather than adding complexity. To this end, we stand ready to support this work, in particular by providing accurate and up-to-date information on access and benefit-sharing in the context of the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol to the discussions.

Distinguished delegates,

The joint interests of the Convention and the International Treaty also extend to broader aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. I would like to highlight our recent joint efforts, in partnership with the Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Bioversity International, drawing attention to the need to strengthen the conservation of crop wild relatives. A notification co-signed by all four Secretariats involved has been issued to all our respective focal points providing further information including suggested actions at the national level.

To this end, I'm very pleased that the Parties to the CBD decided that the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties would address, among other things, the mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity across relevant sectors, including agriculture and forestry. COP-13 will be hosted by Mexico in December 2016 and the issue of mainstreaming will also be included as part of the High Level Segment of the meeting. I thus look forward to working with FAO and Ministers of Agriculture from your countries to further this important initiative.

In this context, I am also very pleased that the CBD Secretariat has been able to host a staff member of the Treaty Secretariat for the past eighteen months. This concrete example of cooperation has been very fruitful in enabling coordinated action on everything from the Biodiversity Liaison Group to crop wild relatives.

Dear colleagues,

I believe that the partnership between the International Treaty and the Convention on Biological Diversity is a model of mutual supportiveness and synergy. The achievements under the Nagoya Protocol will contribute to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty, while the Treaty's successes will support the CBD in the accomplishment of our mandate. I thus could not be more pleased with our cooperation to date and I look forward to many more opportunities for us to work together in the future as a contribution towards achieving global goals. I wish you all a very successful and productive meeting.

Thank you for your kind attention.