

**REPORT ON GLOBAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2010**

To-date, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has given permission to use the logo for the International Year of Biological Diversity to over 2,000 organizations, who in turn will partner with their counterparts to promote the International Year in their region. Listed below, are but a few of the many successful events. For full details, please visit <http://www.cbd.int/2010/celebrations/>.

The message of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, to the international community was issued on 2 January 2010. The International Year was officially launched by Presidency of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at the Museum of Natural History in Berlin. In the presence of over 400 participants the German Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel urged the world to take the necessary steps to protect the biological diversity of the Earth. The ceremony was attended by Mr. Issei Tajima, Senior Vice-Minister of the Environment of Japan, as the representative of incoming President of the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting, and the Minister of Yemen in his capacity as the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China.

On 7 January, Brazil celebrated the International Year in Curitiba, the host of COP 8, with the participation of Mayor Beto Richa of Curitiba, Acting Minister of Environment Izabella Teixeira of Brazil, and Minister Mah Bow Tan of Singapore. The event was held at the margins of the Second Curitiba Meeting on Cities and Biodiversity which was attended by 95 participants, including representatives of 18 cities from around the world.

On 12 January, Minister Jean Louis Borloo of France organized the launch of the International Year in Paris with the participation of more than 1400 participants. The movie “Oceans” of Jacques Perrin was shown. The award competition for “French Capital on Biodiversity” was also launched.

On 14 January, the British Royal Society celebrated its 350th anniversary by organizing a scientific event on biodiversity. The representatives of the 60 countries attending on 16 January the consultation on the strategic plan, organized by the United Kingdom and Brazil also celebrated the International Year at the Museum of Natural History of London, which had hosted, in November 2009, the launch of the UK-IYB committee comprising 200 partners.

On 15 January, Bioversity International launched its campaign in support to the International Year.

An international conference on “Redefining Sustainability in the International Agenda: Inspiring Greater Engagement in Biodiversity Issues” and an EcoChic Fashion Show were organized in Geneva by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on 20-21 January as a contribution to the celebration of the International Year.

On 20 January, the French Museum of Natural History hosted a meeting of the CBD Scientific Consortium to finalize their plans to celebrate the International Year.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) hosted an inaugural event on 21-22 January, followed by a scientific conference from 25 to 29 January, at its headquarters in Paris. The ceremony took place with the participation of the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau and the French Minister of State, Mr Jean Louis Borloo, as well as the President of the General Conference of UNESCO. The international exhibit of the International Year was inaugurated. Entries received from the children's photo competition organized by Airbus and the National Geographic Society were displayed at UNESCO.

On 25 January, the Japanese official launch took place in Tokyo. During the event, the first meeting of the Japanese national committee for the International Year of Biodiversity was held during the IYB kick-off event. The committee, chaired by the Chairman of Nippon Keidanren, was comprised of national and local governments, academia, NGOs, private sector and media. The meeting was followed by the appointment of additional members of "Life on the Earth" Supporters (mostly celebrities and famous figures) which attracted much attention of the Japanese media.

On 26 January, China initiated the IYB celebration in Beijing. About 500 participants attended this initiation ceremony, including Ministers and Vice-Ministers of all biodiversity-related central government departments, heads of provincial environment departments, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and the media. A monument for IYB was opened for public display at this ceremony. China has planned a series of celebration activities throughout the year.

On 26-27 January in Madrid, the Spanish Ministry for Environment and Rural Affairs, in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Commission, celebrated the launch of the International Year with the participation of 48 European countries attending the conference on the "Post-2010 Biodiversity Vision and Target". A Spanish public-awareness campaign, "biodiversity is music", was launched, and the European Commission announced a five million euro public-awareness biodiversity campaign.

On 28 January, the Netherlands celebrated the launch of the International Year. The Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Minister of Education, Culture and Science attended the festivities. It was a high-level event which also celebrated the launch of the Dutch National Center of Biodiversity: NCB Naturalis. This state-of-the-art institute will assemble, make accessible and exhibit the largest part of the Dutch natural history collections of plants and animals. The establishment of the National Center of Biodiversity is one of the ways in which the Dutch Government contributes to the national as well as international conservation of biodiversity. It will provide significant support for public information and scientific research and education on the subject of biodiversity.

On 28 January, the multimedia show entitled *Paradis Perdu* (Paradise Lost) was launched in Montreal as a contribution to the celebration of the International Year.

On 29 January, Environment Canada launched the "Nature Matters" contest inviting Canadians between the ages of 9 and 35 years to submit written or video essays that answer the following question "Why is nature important to you?". Grand prize winners will be invited to Ottawa to attend the Grand Re-opening Event of the Canadian Museum of Nature on 22 May 2010, the International Day for Biological Diversity, where their achievement will be announced.

The Department of Conservation led the New Zealand Government in the celebration of the International Year with a media release on Friday, 29 January. The Department is liaising with other government agencies including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry of Fisheries and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and will be planning activities in association with local government, organizations such as Landcare Research and non-government organizations throughout the Year.

The 500 participants attending the sixth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity held from 1 to 5 February celebrated the International Year of Biodiversity and the video of the International

Year was showed. Norway organized on 1 February the Norwegian launch of the International Year with more than 300 participants. The celebration was held with the participation of Mr. Erik Solheim, Minister of Environment and International Cooperation of Norway.

On 4 February, the Council of Foreign Relations of Montreal (CORIM) organized a luncheon on the International Year with more than 300 participants.

On 4 February, the IYB was launched in New Delhi at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2010. An annual global event attended by several Heads of State and Government and chief executive officers of major companies. The event was organized jointly by the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and UNESCO. A press/media event with Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of Environment and Forests, in which the minister released a biodiversity brochure entitled “Achieving 2010 Biodiversity Target: India’s Contributions”, and a table calendar for the year 2010 was released by the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) depicting award-winning entries by school children in a painting competition organized by NMNH during the Wildlife Week in October 2009 on the theme “Our Rich Biodiversity”. A message from the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity was delivered at the event.

In the United Kingdom, under the coordination of the Natural History Museum, 190 organizations have signed up to the national campaign and are organizing activities including talks, exhibitions, public dialogues, artwork, citizen science experiments encompassing science and the arts.

UNDP is hosting an event to launch the International Year in New York at the American Museum of Natural History’s famed Hall of Ocean Life on 10 February 2010. The North American Launch will feature remarks by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and will include a round-table discussion with key biodiversity scientists and NGO leaders. The launch will also include a sneak preview of *Life*, the Discovery Channel/BBC’s follow-up to the critically-acclaimed series *Planet Earth*.

The sporting goods company PUMA AG and the United Nations Environment Programme, together with Cameroon’s national football team announced “The Play for Life” partnership to support biodiversity worldwide with a special focus on initiatives in Africa. Awareness-raising campaigns will be held among football fans and the general public during worldwide football events, including the Orange Cup of African Nations in Angola and international friendly games leading-up to the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa.

In addition, countless ongoing projects and planned initiatives indicate that the IYB 2010 is well on the way towards achieving many of its goals as stated in the IYB Implementation Strategy. Some examples are listed below:

- The Palau telephone company will issue their 2010 telephone directory. The front cover artwork for 2010 will celebrate the biodiversity of Palau
- The Discovery Channel will highlight IYB
- The 200 UNESCO Clubs in French are celebrating the International Year and a number of schools events all over the world are being planned
- Finland established its national IYB committee under the aegis of the President of Finland.
- The biodiversity of Afghanistan, a field guide project, was issued in January as a contribution to the celebration of IYB
- The Green Church project of Montreal launched a poster “Help preserve biodiversity: The Work of God” as a contribution to the celebration of IYB
- BiodiversityMatters, a Canadian community based initiative comprised of students, teachers and interested, dedicated community members, is proudly supporting the International Youth Accord on Biodiversity in which youth from around the world are writing about what they

would like to see from Governments in relation to the conservation of biodiversity. In October 2010, youth will be presenting the International Youth Accord at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10), in Japan. This document will be opened to the international public in early 2010 for signature by children and young people.

- The resort municipality of Whistler, in close collaboration with the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC), the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Secretariat, will celebrate the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity during the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympics' Games. Events include: (i) an education campaign on the biodiversity and socio-economic benefits from expanding protected areas in the resort community setting, (ii) collaboration with community partners to share Whistler's biodiversity story with the world in 2010, (iii) identification of areas with high ecosystem and socio-economic value as potential protected areas, and (iv) show-casing Whistler as a destination that not only values, but invests in, biodiversity to enable the community and visitors to enjoy ecosystem services and values in perpetuity.

Only one month after its official launch, the IYB Facebook page has reached 17,400 fans. It is for this reason that the January issue of the French magazine *Science et Avenir* listed the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity as the second most important milestone for the year among the ten events that will mark 2010.

To date, three Heads of State have officially come on board in support of the International Year.

To record the achievements of the International Year, the Convention Secretariat has established the IYB Museum comprising outreach materials prepared by Parties and partners to mark this event. The Museum will be displayed at the closing ceremony of the International Year to be held in Kanazawa, Japan, in December 2010, as well as at the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly when it will consider the final report of the International Year.