



COMMUNIQUÉ

Biodiversity community comes together in Geneva to launch the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Montreal, 19 August 2011 – In conjunction with the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Government of Switzerland, in partnership with the Japanese presidency of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) hosted the official launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for Europe with the participation of the secretariats of CITES, CBD and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The meeting was attended by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

In welcoming the participants, HE Mr. Kenichi Suganuma, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, speaking on behalf of the President of the Conference of the Parties stated that “The Decade is intended to extend the mandate of the International Year of Biodiversity of 2010 to the next ten years, and to implement the Aichi Biodiversity Targets under a more universal framework. We, as the COP10 presidency for the initial two years of the decade, wish to take the lead, and your support would be highly appreciated.”

Mr. Franz Perrez, the Ambassador of Switzerland for the Environment and the host of the event, announced the intention of the Government of Switzerland to establish the post of Liaison Officer for the CBD in Geneva with a view to promoting the coordination of the secretariats of the biodiversity conventions for the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The Secretary-General of CITES, Mr. John E. Scanlon, stated: “The joint European launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity highlights the significant contribution that CITES can make towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets through the conservation and sustainable use of species.”

Mr. Anada Tiéga, Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention, stressed the importance of the biodiversity liaison group in promoting, in a mutually supportive manner, the objectives of the biodiversity conventions.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the CBD, stated that the announcement of the establishment of the post of Liaison Officer for the CBD in Geneva is yet another demonstration of the unique and creative ways to promote synergy among the biodiversity-related conventions.

The launch of the United Nations Decade by the General Assembly will take place on 20 September in New York at the margins of its sixty-sixth session and it will be followed on 17-19 December by the global launch hosted by Japan in its capacity as president of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.