



**Press Brief**

**INDIA LAUNCHED BIODIVERSITY DECADE  
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

New Delhi, May 25, 2011

The Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity **launched the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011-2020) for Asia and the Pacific, on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2011.** A Stakeholders' consultation on taking biodiversity conservation forward was also held on the same day.

At the launch, Minister for Environment and Forests Mr. Jairam Ramesh welcomed the international community to India, and said: *'as a mega-diverse nation and host of COP-11 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, India stands committed to the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention. Conservation is a national imperative for us as lives and livelihoods of millions of rural and urban people are dependent on its sustainable use.'*

**Background**

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international treaty to sustain the diversity of life on earth. At the tenth Conference of Parties (CoP-10), in Nagoya, Japan, a new global plan to help protect the natural environment was reached. This ten year 'Strategic Plan' includes 20 headline targets – called the 'Aichi Targets', and is organized under five goals. Some key targets include: at least halving the rate of loss of natural ecosystems; preserving at least 17 percent of terrestrial and inland waters and 10 percent of marine coastal areas; restoring at least 15 percent of degraded areas; and making special efforts to reduce pressure on coral reefs.

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2011 to 2020 as the **UN Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB)** with a view of raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity (or the variety of life on earth), and achieving the Aichi Targets.

**India will host the eleventh Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity in October 2012** – the first CoP under the UNDB. The sixth Conference of the Parties serving as Meeting of the Parties (CoP/MoP-6) to the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety will also be hosted by India. The year 2012 is significant because it marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stockholm Conference, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic Rio Earth Summit, and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Johannesburg Summit.



## **Launch of the UN Decade on Biodiversity**

More than 500 participants were urged to extend every effort to conserve global biological diversity.

In his video message for the UNDB 2011-2020, the United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon said: *'we have all heard of the web of life. We risk trapping ourselves in a web of death. The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity is an opportunity to reverse this trend'*.

Minister Jairam Ramesh addressed the international community, and unveiled the CoP-11 logo and slogan – *'Prakruthi Rakshathi Rakshita'* – which means 'Nature protects if she is protected'. A video on India's biodiversity, *'Incredible India and Incredible Biodiversity'* was also screened.

The launch was attended by Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Secretary of the CBD Secretariat, and the Vice-Minister of Environment, Japan representing the CoP-10 Presidency, Ministers of Environment from Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, Ambassadors/High Commissioners of Delhi based Missions, the National Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, Central Government Ministries, UN bodies, international organizations, Civil Society Organizations, and industry.

## **Stakeholders' Consultations**

Special sessions were dedicated to stakeholder engagement, and make a beginning at taking the UNDB targets forward. Sessions were held for civil society, UN and Donor Agencies, State Biodiversity Boards, and businesses.

\*\_\*\_\*\_\*\_\*

## **CBD CoP-11 Logo**



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
INDIA 2012