

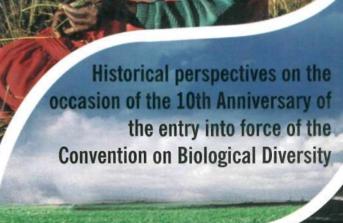
SPECIAL EDITION

THE CONVENTION ON

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

FROM CONCEPTION
TO IMPLEMENTATION





## INTRODUCTION AND CONGRATULATIONS

## Message from Hamdallah Zedan

Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity



This is a time of great promise and great challenge for the Convention on Biological Diversity. The 10th anniversary of

the entry into force of the Convention is a time to commemorate its achievements, to assess its progress, and spur on efforts to achieve the target of achieving a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

During the negotiations for the Convention, many argued that economic and social development and poverty eradication were the overriding priority and that environmental protection was a secondary issue. Gradually and significantly, over the last ten years, we have seen a major shift in thinking; measures to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity are now seen a prerequisite for—and not as an alternative to—economic and social development efforts. Nowhere was this change in outlook more marked that in the

recognition by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 of the contribution of the work done within the framework of the Convention to promote sustainable development, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty eradication and the livelihoods and cultural integrity of people.

Given this transformation of global thinking, it is encouraging to see the Convention's principles taking shape through comprehensive and internationally agreed programmes of work covering all major biomes and guided by a specific target that provides a clear road map for the work ahead.

The entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on 11 September 2003 was also an important milestone in the implementation for the Convention. The impact of modern biotechnology on biological diversity has been an issue under the Convention from the early stage in the negotiations and the entry into force of the Protocol is an example of how the Convention process is capable of producing successful tools for the implementation of its objectives. As Parties embark on the process of negotiating an international regime for access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from their use, the lessons learned from the experience of the Cartagena Protocol will prove extremely valuable.

I want to congratulate all the States that have ratified and committed themselves to implementing both the Convention and the Protocol, and I wish to urge those that have not yet done so to follow suit as soon as possible. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all the authors who have contributed to this special edition of the CBD News. Their very personal views, perspectives and reminiscences of the process through which the Convention has developed are an invaluable contribution to the history of the Convention, a tribute to all our past efforts, and a beacon to guide us in the work ahead.

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