

World Habitat Day 1 October 2007

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MR. AHMED DJOGHLAF
ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD HABITAT DAY 1 OCTOBER 2007

A safe city is a just city. Security in cities is a growing concern worldwide and, while it must be addressed at the global level to raise awareness of the problem, the key to the solution is in the hands of local governments and communities. Promoting sustainable use of biological resources is part and parcel of any strategy aimed at addressing the safety challenges facing modern cities. Making this issue the focus of this year's World Habitat Day is clear evidence of the bond between global governance and local communities and of the role played by cities in alleviating the strain on local communities and in promoting the sustainable use of biological diversity.

Primary direct threats to biodiversity are mostly related to public services and instruments held by local governments. Threats to biodiversity such as infrastructure development, conversion of natural habitats to other land uses, over-harvesting and overexploitation of natural resources, introduction of invasive alien species, and pollution are interconnected with local public provision of water, waste collection, sanitation, and are regulated under local land-use-planning legislation. It is therefore important to acknowledge the critical role of local governments in the solutions to these global problems.

At the time of enhanced phase of implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the role of local governments is crucial. It is for this reason that at the initiative of the Mayor of Curitiba, Carlos Richa, the representatives of 34 mayors adopted in March 2007, the Curitiba Declaration on Cities and Biodiversity. The Curitiba Youth Declaration was also adopted. At the initiative of Bärbel Dieckmann, Mayor of Bonn, the high-level segment of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Bonn, Germany from 28-30 May 2008 will be preceded by a municipal meeting on Cities and Biodiversity

On this World Habitat Day let us not forget the challenge put to us by the youth in the Curitiba Youth Declaration: "We are part of the urban biodiversity and, as responsible people, we keep the commitment of taking care of our city To live well in our city and in any city of the world, it is necessary to be a collaborator in the building of all people's cities. Do your part...we are going to do ours."

Montreal, 29 September 2007

Convention On Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int