



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



Achieving the
2010
Biodiversity
Target

MESSAGE FROM DR. AHMED DJOGLAF
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
on the occasion of
WORLD WETLANDS DAY
02 February 2008

Wetlands and the biodiversity they support, play a critical role in sustainable development. Healthy wetlands contribute to the provision of food, clean water, pharmaceutical products, etc. Mismanaging wetlands results in the impairment of our health and even the loss of life - such as through the effects of water-related diseases, burning peatlands, unwanted floods, and water pollution. Because water is essential to life, wetlands issues permeate almost all aspects of human well-being.

It is therefore fitting that the theme for World Wetlands Day, 2 February 2008, is *Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People*, and this will also be the theme for Ramsar's tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in October-November 2008 in the Republic of Korea

The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (in Bonn, Germany, 19 – 30 May 2008) and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention will take place in the same year. We shall make the most of this unusual opportunity to maximize the impact of both Conventions. For example, the thirteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice scheduled to take place from 18-22 February, 2008, in Rome, Italy, will consider the in-depth review of the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity, presenting an opportunity to strengthen attention to urgent water issues in the field of agriculture. Our joint preparations with the Ramsar Secretariat for CBD COP-9, include the review of opportunities for further action to support the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity of wetlands in relation to climate change.

Our two Secretariats are currently liaising regarding: harmonizing reporting between the two conventions, leading to improved information generation and reduced reporting burdens on our Parties; indicators for 2010 biodiversity targets for wetlands; agriculture and water; human health; climate change; and Communication, Education and Public Awareness. These examples of the working relationships between the Ramsar



Convention and the CBD continue to set an example for how high-level policy instruments can complement each other. Because water is essential for all living things, I am pleased to demonstrate this partnership between the Convention on Wetlands and the CBD for the benefit of all life on earth.

On this World Wetlands Day, I reaffirm my commitment to the Secretary General's call on the UN system and all stakeholders to forge stronger partnerships and take more concerted action, not only this year, but throughout the entire International Decade for Action: "Water for Life", 2005-2015.