



COMMUNIQUÉ

United Nations University launches Master of Science programme in Environmental Governance with specialization in Biodiversity

Montreal, 11 October 2011 – A Master of Science (MSc) programme in Environmental Governance which includes a specialization in Biodiversity was launched in Tokyo by the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University (UNU-IAS).

The inauguration ceremony, held in Tokyo on 10 October 2011 with the participation of more than 200 participants, included senior officials of the Government of Japan and ambassadors accredited to Tokyo. The new programme approaches biodiversity from a multi-disciplinary perspective and draws on UNU-IAS's long-standing reputation for excellence in policy-oriented research for sustainable development.

At the launch, Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity, delivered a key note presentation titled “The Aichi Nagoya: the embryo of the new biodiversity governance system.”

The ceremony was preceded by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the CBD Executive Secretary and Professor Govindan Parayil, Vice-Rector of the UNU and Director of UNU-IAS, with the presence of Prof. Dr. Konrad Osterwalder, UNU Rector. The objective of the MOU is for UNU-IAS to support implementation of the Convention and for the Convention Secretariat to collaborate in the management of the new Master of Science programme. The agreement aims also to promote exchange of staff and provide internships to post-graduate students in the Secretariat.

“The loss of biological diversity is a critical issue we face today, and UNU-IAS recognizes its mandate, as an academic institution and UN think-tank with strengths in biodiversity and sustainable development, to play a key role in this global challenge. We also hope that our master's degree programme will contribute to the implementation of the CBD at different levels, from the global to the local,” said Professor Parayil.

Prof. Dr. Osterwalder said: “As an academic institution within the United Nations system, UN University needs to contribute directly to the work of our sister institutions in the United Nations. UNU-IAS and SCBD have been partners on many projects and initiatives, and the MOU they signed today will cement their strong partnership, which now includes this master's programme.”

The first field-visit of the newly enrolled students will take place in Montreal in July 2012. The Secretariat will provide support to the new programme through its Consortium of Universities as well as its Consortium of Scientific Institutions.
