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GINCANIÑO

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A newsletter on youth and biodiversity by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Calling Children and Youth to Action

Upon his arrival in January 2006 and in the run-up to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8), the Executive Secretary issued a **Message to Children and Youth** around the globe. In the message, Dr. Djoghlafl stressed the significance of the younger generation in the battle for life on Earth (see message below). Young people from everywhere responded to the challenge and made their presence felt throughout COP8, as they had previously in April 2002, when a full-fledged

Youth Conference was organized on the margins of COP-6 in The Hague, The Netherlands. It is the hope of Dr. Djoghlafl that children and youth representatives will actively participate and present their vibrant concerns at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Germany in 2008. For the Convention, the younger generation's dynamism represents hope. Young people are in a position of great responsibility and the planet awaits their action.



Ahmed Djoghlafl, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the children of Curitiba, Brazil, in March 2006.

You Can Contribute!

The Secretariat invites children and youth to give their opinion, insight and views. This could be done by submitting:

- (1) Case studies of biodiversity protection in your neighbourhood.
- (2) Examples of youth in action.

Submissions for the newsletter should be sent to secretariat@biodiv.org.

Launch of Youth Newsletter

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is launching its very first newsletter for children and youth: Gincaniño. The name of the newsletter was inspired from our main newsletter, Gincana, a portuguese word meaning working together in the spirit of cooperation.

This newsletter is meant to share information from the Secretariat to the youth of the world, but also to enable youth to share experiences amongst themselves. This is why we invite YOU to send us an article of your biodiversity experience you would like to share with your peers. Welcome to the global biodiversity network!

Valérie Vendette
Children and Youth Focal Point

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF THE WORLD

You, the children and youth of the world, make up almost one half of the world population of over six billion people. Your health and well-being are directly and seriously affected by environmental problems and biodiversity loss. This is unacceptable. You are a force that must be make itself counted in the fight against the loss of biodiversity.

Environmental protection has become a key component in the agendas of youth organizations all over the world. While every part of society has a responsibility for maintaining the environmental integrity of the community, young people have a particular interest in preserving a healthy environment, since they are the ones that will inherit it.

Continued on page 2

Calling Children and Youth to Action (continued from p.1)

Eighty-five per cent of young people live in developing countries, where threats to the environment are inextricably linked to their health and safety. We know that environmental quality is one the key factors in determining whether a child survives the first years of their life. We also know that healthy school environments can significantly raise a child's learning potential. In these countries, lack of available water often forces people—more often than not, children and women—to spend a lot of time fetching and carrying that precious commodity, often at great distances from their homes. We know that you are also the most susceptible to air pollutants in places where the natural environment does not filter them appropriately. It is also true that biodiversity loss increases the drudgery experienced by children and youth living in harsh environmental conditions, and therefore undermines your health.

You represent the future generation and the leaders of tomorrow. You are therefore in a key position, as future decision makers, to shape the direction of today's decisions that may negatively impact on your adult life. You are in a key position but also in a position of great responsibility, as this planet awaits your action.

The unique contribution that the younger generation can and should make to the protection of the environment was recognized by the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, in June 1992. In adopting chapter 25 of Agenda 21, the 101 Heads of State or Government attending this meeting reaffirmed the need to “advance the role of youth and activity and involve them in the protection of the environment and the promotion of economic and social development”. I am making this call to you in the spirit of the 2002 Youth Declaration, adopted at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

on Biological Diversity, in The Hague, in which you expressed your desire to make your voices and grave concerns heard in the international biodiversity agenda. Your dynamism is our hope.



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on Biological Diversity, in The Hague, in which you expressed your desire to make your voices and grave concerns heard in the international biodiversity agenda. Your dynamism is our hope. The Convention on Biological Diversity is about life on Earth. It is about our own survival as much as that of all living organisms that surround us. You, the children and youth of the world, are the epitome of life, and life is at the core of our mission. The Convention is an international agreement, a contract between nations to cooperate, an agreement geared towards action.

for change. You are major stakeholders in ensuring the successful implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. We will all greatly benefit from working with you.

Last year, the United Nations decided that the period 2005-2014 would be the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development. This is a unique opportunity for you to link education to environmental protection. Education represents unique chance to channel your concerns in the form of learning opportunities that lead to action in your own classrooms, your communities, and at the national and international levels.

Because the Convention on Biological Diversity is your Convention and your passport to tomorrow's healthy environment, I call on you to be fully engaged in its implementation at a time when the Parties, countries of which you are citizens, have actively embarked on a new and exciting phase of its existence; a phase aimed at translating its objectives into practical achievements to tackle the day-to-day challenges of our global village.

The battle to protect life on Earth is yours, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, that I have the honour

to head in the years to come, will always be on your side as your partner and your faithful ally. To this end, a dedicated staff member within the Secretariat of the Convention, Ms. Valérie Vendette has been designated as your focal point. The cause of biodiversity provides a unique opportunity to unite and cooperate. Let's join forces to win this battle to stem its loss, a battle that no one can afford to lose and from which every human being on our planet stands to gain.



By protecting the planet's biodiversity you will protect your own future and preserve life on Earth. You cannot afford to adopt a neutral status on such a vital issue. You have tremendous potential as catalysts

Dr. Ahmed Djoghla
Executive Secretary of the Convention on
Biological Diversity

What can I do about biodiversity?



While governments should play a leadership role, other sectors of society, including Children and Youth groups --either via individual action or through youth groups and clubs--need to be dynamically involved.

After all, it is the choices and actions of billions of individuals that will determine whether or not biodiversity is conserved and used sustainably. Youth comprise a high proportion of the world's population and the central role they play in all societies renders action by this group even more vital.

The critical decision-maker for biodiversity is the individual citizen. Since it is personal consumption that drives development, which in turn affects the natural environment, the small choices that individuals make add up to a large impact. Youth play a significant economic role as important consumer of goods and services. Through thoughtful choices of products and services, youth can begin to steer the world in the right direction.

Things that you can do to improve your own "backyard":

- Money doesn't talk, it screams. Use your spending power! Avoid buying products made from reptile skins. Many reptiles are protected by international trade laws because of their low numbers and are often used for wallets, belts or boots. Other items to avoid include ivory, tortoise shells, coral and wild-animal pelts;

- If you use products containing ginseng to help give you a boost of energy, make sure that it's not collected from the wild. The important international demand for ginseng is putting pressure on wild ginseng plants;

- Help convert a vacant lot into a habitat for indigenous animals and plants. With the appropriate authorization, you could organize with a group of friends, fellow students from your school or a local community group to grow shrubs, bushes, flowers and trees that will appeal to wildlife.

- Install a birdhouse in your yard. This will encourage birds to stay in your neighbourhood, even if their nesting habitat is spoilt, as happens often in and near large cities;

- Enhance your knowledge of the birds in your area by building a bird feeder. Bird

seeds such as sunflower seeds, peanut butter balls, or peels from various fruits hung from a tree are examples of things you can use to feed the birds. This can be done at home or in school;

- Buy recycled or salvaged wood every time you can (make sure the wood products you buy are certified by an independent observer which can attest that the product comes from a forest harvested in compliance with strict criteria or following set principles of environmental protection by, for example, evaluating forest management practices and the tracking of forest products);

- Don't release pets - including aquarium fish or turtles - into the wild. You will thus help reduce threats to endemic species from so-called "alien invasive species", a major cause of the loss of biodiversity.

"Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Interested in Creating a CBD Youth Club?

In February 2006, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) invited the world's youth to establish Youth Clubs of the CBD.

The principal objectives of these clubs would be for young people to raise awareness among friends and fellow students on the importance of preserving the diversity of all forms of life on Earth. It would also

promote the International Day for Biological Diversity, May 22, and the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. Above all, they would enable young people to ACT in their communities.

Activities could be carried out through concrete actions of which only young people are the architects. Some possibilities, among others, might be to organize education and outreach campaigns, natural site

cleanups and international North-South twinning activities.

Interested youths can call on their imagination to facilitate the creation of these youth clubs. For instance, CBD or biodiversity clubs can be attached to already existing student groups or youth associations. As such, these clubs will keep their identity and individuality, with the Secretariat involved in support rather than accreditation. Examples of support from the Secretariat could include promoting the initiative at a global level and by providing a platform to facilitate twinning activities.

The Secretariat is awaiting your ideas; the best, most original ones will be adapted to local and regional contexts and will, of course... be yours!



Global Art Competition



Ana Joyse Dominguez Rivera, 6, Mexico

The Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture, in collaboration with SIWI, RAMSAR, CBD, FAO, FANCA and the Challenge Program on Water and Food, organized a global art competition in the spring of 2006 to illustrate 18 key messages on water for food & life. Overall, 122 beautiful and inspiring art pieces were received in the children's category. Eighteen artworks have been selected and some were presented at the Stockholm Water week, August 20-26, 2006.

International Day for Biological Diversity 2007

We invite you to join in our celebrations for the International Day for Biological Diversity, May 22! Every year, a new theme is chosen to celebrate this important day. This year's theme will be "Biodiversity and Climate Change", complementing the designation of 2007 as the International Polar Year and coinciding with UNEP'S World Environment Day theme of Climate Change. Climate change is already forcing biodiversity to adapt either through shifting habitat, changing life cycles, or the development of new physical traits. However, the links between biodiversity and climate change run both ways: biodiversity is threatened by human-induced climate change but, biodiversity resources can reduce the impacts of climate change on people and production. Lectures, seminars, film presentations, cultural events, exhibitions and school outreach activities are just some sugges-



The website provides links to a variety of resources, including:

- Booklet on Biodiversity and Climate Change
- Fact sheets
- IBD Poster

We encourage you to link to this page and disseminate it amongst your peers. The Secretariat would also appreciate receiving reports of any activities you organize, either with a youth group or a school, to celebrate this Day. Your ideas and activities marking the occasion will be posted on the CBD website to promote continued dedication to preserving the world's biological diversity.

tions that you can organize to help draw attention to one of the most critical issues facing our planet today. Visit our website highlighting the day's events at: <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtm>

The Secretariat would like to thank all communities from around the world for celebrating the International Day for Biological Diversity with a view to promoting the implementation of the Convention and its goals.

Promoting Biodiversity Awareness in Schools



In honour of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has committed itself to raise awareness on issues pertaining to Biodiversity in the Montreal area schools. To achieve this, staff members of the Secretariat are visiting schools to talk about the work of the CBD and the importance of preserving life on earth. Staff members engage students in a lively question and answer period, provoking their curiosity on the importance of preserving biodiversity. Overall students are quite familiar with the environmental threats facing our world today, and have demonstrated a very keen interest in understanding what the CBD is doing to help solve the environmental

problems facing the world today.

This year, the demand for presentations in the Montreal area schools was so great that the Secretariat had to recruit university students from the faculties of education, biology and environment as CBD ambassadors.

In order to ensure conformity and accuracy of information students from the faculty of education attended a two day training session held here at the Secretariat. The students were welcomed by the Executive Secretary who thanked them for their dedication and their commitment to promote biodiversity education in schools. The training was given by CBD staff members which included a brief overview of the mandate of the Convention, followed by a detailed review of the teaching tools which focused on what is biodiversity, why it is important to preserve it and what we can do to help stop the loss of biodiversity. Teaching tips on to how best communicate the importance of biodiversity was provided to the students. The training session concluded with an interactive question and answer period to make certain that

the information received would ensure a successful outreach campaign.

The Secretariat aspires to have the active participation of educators worldwide to spread biodiversity messages. Our goal is not only to contribute to public knowledge, but also to encourage and promote the personal involvement of students and, through them, of the wider community at large to explore, celebrate and protect our planet's amazing web of life.

As the Secretariat continues to promote biodiversity education and awareness as part of the school curriculum, the extremely positive feedback we have received is an encouraging indication that we are moving in the right direction.



Des étudiants proposent des pistes de solutions

This article highlights some possible solutions presented by pre-university students to the Secretariat on ways of addressing the inter-related issues of climate change and biodiversity. These students attended a presentation on this topic at the Secretariat in October 2006

En octobre 2006, des étudiants du Cégep Édouard Montpetit ont assisté à une présentation, offerte par le SCDB, sur la perte de biodiversité et les changements climatiques, ainsi que le rôle que joue le Secrétariat face à ces enjeux. Suite à la présentation, ces étudiants ont complété un travail dans lequel ils devaient exposer des pistes de solutions pour réduire le changement climatique comme facteur accentuant la perte de biodiversité et dont le Secrétariat serait l'un des acteurs. Voici des exemples de ce que les étudiants, de niveau pré-universitaire, avaient à dire :

« Selon [le rapport Stern], pour vaincre les impacts du réchauffement accéléré de la planète, les pays doivent investir près de 1% du leur PIB pour réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre et réparer les dégâts commis par les changements climatiques. L'économiste ajoute que le prix de l'inaction pourrait être jusqu'à 20 fois plus dispendieux, soit de 5 à 20% du PIB mondial. D'après ce rapport sérieux, nous proposons d'établir des plans d'action pour chaque

pays, membre ou non-membre, car ce problème concerne l'humanité et non pas un groupe de pays restreint. Ces plans d'action seraient créés, pour chaque pays, de concert avec un représentant du gouvernement en poste, un représentant de l'opposition officielle du gouvernement, un expert apolitique environnemental du pays en question, et un représentant industriel. Ce plan d'action environnemental se doterait d'un budget théorique correspondant à 1% du PIB du pays et les actions à poser seraient en ordre d'importance. Tous les points d'intervention du plan seront spécifiques au pays et en ordre de priorité. (...) Dans cette solution aux changements climatiques, le rôle de la Convention pour la conservation de la biodiversité et de la Convention contre les changements climatiques est de créer un système administratif simple et efficace pour gérer la création des plans d'action et le suivi des investissements du PIB de chaque pays dans l'économie verte. »

Zoé Lavoie-Gouin, Estelle Landry-Paré et Marie-Claude Plessis-Bélair.



Des spécialistes du Secrétariat expliquent la relation entre les changements climatiques et la biodiversité

« Une autre piste de solution, pour réduire le changement climatique comme facteur accentuant la perte de biodiversité, forte intéressante est l'œuvre du Mexique. Celui-ci a développé un projet qui lui permet de projeter les impacts qu'aurait une élévation du niveau des océans sur l'hydrologie, la salinité ou la perte de ses milieux humides. La région située le long de la côte du Golf du Mexique, est une des plus vulnérable et menacée face à la hausse du niveau de la mer de tout le pays. Ce projet, consacré à développer des mesures

d'adaptations spécifiques pour réduire les impacts des changements climatiques sur la biodiversité et les communautés locales, est divisé en deux phases. Premièrement, il veut estimer et analyser la vulnérabilité de la flore, de la faune et des actifs économiques de la région visée. Deuxièmement, il prévoit inventer et implanter des mesures de restauration des milieux humides et leurs écosystèmes, dans le but de les protéger contre les changements climatiques. En conséquent, le Secrétariat sur la diversité biologique sera un acteur d'envergure en ce qui a trait à l'expertise sur le sujet, celui-ci pourra grandement aider les chercheurs mexicains en leur donnant des informations cruciales à la réussite de leur projet. »

Pascal Bouchard et Yan Raymond-Lalande

« Finalement, nous croyons qu'il serait profitable à la communauté internationale de se doter d'un centre de recherche, sous la tutelle du Secrétariat de la Convention sur la diversité biologique, collectif à tous les États contractants. Puisqu'il est entendu que la lutte aux changements climatiques est une responsabilité commune, le savoir scientifique et technologique se doit d'être une propriété publique. Le rôle du Secrétariat est, ainsi, de promouvoir le progrès scientifique en matière de biodiversité au profit de la communauté internationale. Subséquentement, tous pourraient bénéficier de l'expertise spécifique à chacun et mettre à profit la leur. Ce centre de recherche donnerait également l'occasion à ceux qui disposent de peu de moyens, d'évoluer dans un environnement à la hauteur de leur capacité. Le Secrétariat assurerait également la diffusion de toutes nouvelles avancées en matière d'environnement, pour l'ensemble des États signataires. La

création de ce centre de recherche serait précisément axée sur l'avancement scientifique concernant la préservation et la régénérescence de la biodiversité, par exemple des

études portant sur l'évolution de certaines espèces fauniques et florales, ou encore, le réaménagement des écosystèmes en fonction des changements climatiques. »

Chloé Rousselle et Aimie Néron



Dans la salle de conférence du Secrétariat, les étudiants sont invités à poser des questions aux spécialistes

Los jóvenes asumen el rol protagónico en la conservación y protección del ambiente dentro del Perú

This article is about the role of Peruvian youth in protecting their environment. Peru is overflowing with biological resources, but most of these are currently under threat. The youth of Peru, thanks to their strong feeling of connectedness with their environment and the dramatic changes it is undergoing, have united on several occasions to analyze the situation. The concern, interest, and above all work, of Peruvian youth to resolve these issues will succeed if everyone contributes to changing the world. "Remember that man's home must be respected and valued"

El ambiente en el cual vivimos viene soportando una serie de cambios drásticos y constantes: alteraciones en el sistema ambiental que se expresan mediante variaciones globales, ya sea climáticos, contaminación de ríos, lagos. Océanos, suelo y aire, el recalentamiento de las zonas frías de nuestro planeta, el debilitamiento de la capa de ozono, etc.

Por todo ello los jóvenes del Perú, no ajenos a los problemas ambientales, nos hemos reunido en diferentes oportunidades para analizar esta situación, surgiendo así importantes asociaciones, comités y organizaciones como: "RUA" Red Universitaria Ambiental; "UNIDESA" Unidos para el Desarrollo Sostenible Adecuado, todos integrados por jóvenes quienes asumen la actitud crítica frente a los problemas ambientales del Perú, enfocamos nuestro trabajo a la Conservación y Protección del Ambiente, desarrollando proyectos, Trabajos de Investigación entre otras actividades, con el fin de proponer alternativas de mitigación y remediación a estos problemas, garantizando así un Desarrollo Sostenible.

El Perú tiene el privilegio de ubicarse entre los cinco países Megadiversos del mundo, por la variedad de ecosistemas, especies, recursos genéticos y culturas humanas. Tan rica es la diversidad biológica que se pueden encontrar 84 de las 114 zonas de vida identificadas en el mundo; en flora se calculan unas 25 000 especies (10% del total mundial) de las cuales un 30% son endémicas, primero en número de especies de plantas de propiedades conocidas y utilizadas por la población (4 400 especies); y

primero en especies domesticadas nativas (128 especies). En lo referente a la fauna, es el primer en peces (2 000 especies, 10% del total mundial); el segundo en aves (1 730 especies); el tercero en anfibios (330 especies); y el tercero en mamíferos (462 especies). Siendo un completo desafío para los jóvenes el proteger y conservar estos invaluable recursos naturales, existentes en sus tres regiones: Costa, Sierra y Selva.

En la zona andina del Perú (Sierra - Región Ancash), existen lugares muy interesantes desde el punto de vista ecológico, y paisajístico de indescriptible belleza, como el Parque Nacional del Huascarán ubicada en la Región Ancash, que abarca virtualmente toda la Cordillera Blanca, que es la cordillera

Laguna de Shallap, Vista Frontralla, Ciudad de Huarazy, Cordillera Negra



era tropical más alta del mundo, cuenta con una extensión de 340 000 hectáreas, en la que se alberga gran riqueza de flora y fauna, nevados y bellezas paisajísticas, los nevados como el: Huascarán (6 768 m.s.n.m) pico más alto del Perú y uno de los mayores de América y el Alpamayo (6,120 metros de altura) conocido como la "montaña nevada más bella del mundo", convierten a esta región de montañas en un atractivo turístico internacional.

Dentro del Parque Nacional Huascarán se han identificado 779 especies de flora altoandina distribuidas en 340 géneros y 104 familias. En esta diversidad florística, la familia de las Bromeliáceas está representada por la Puya (Puya Raimondii), considerada como el más bello exponente de la flora alto andina la cual presenta la inflorescencia más grande del mundo, ubicados principalmente en las quebradas Carpa y Qeshque - Distrito de Cátac - Ancash.

Asociada a la vasta flora del parque se encuentran numerosas especies de fauna que aún no han sido suficientemente estudiadas ni inventariadas. Los datos preliminares señalan 112 especies de aves de 33 familias. Entre los mamíferos se han detectado ocho géneros y más de diez especies. Existen también 112 especies de aves distribuidas en 33 familias

La mayor cantidad de la Biodiversidad del Parque Nacional Huascarán, están distribuidas en sus microcuencas que son piezas valiosas del gran tablero de potenciales de la región Ancash y del Perú, éstas se encuentran encuadradas en la Cuenca del Santa, que es una de las más importantes del Pacífico, cuyo sustento son los glaciares de la Cordillera Blanca, que dan origen a innumerables cursos de agua, que forman el caudaloso Río Santa la cual divide a la Cordilleras Blanca de la Cordillera Negra; dentro de esta Cuenca se ubica la Subcuenca del río Quillcay compuesta por las microcuencas: Churup, Quillcayhuanca, Cojup y Shallap, esta última importante para RUA (UNASAM HUARAZ) y demás Estudiosos por su grado de aporte con recurso hídrico, biótico y paisajístico.

La Microcuenca de Shallap, ubicada a la parte este de Huaraz, capital de la Región Ancash - Perú, cuenta con 3 importantes nevados: Collapaco, Anco Punta y Carhuascancha, que forman la Laguna SHALLAP (200m de diámetro). Shallap comprende los niveles altitudinales que van desde aproximadamente los 3,000 m.s.n.m hasta la divisoria de aguas, con altitudes que sobrepasan los 5,000 m.s.n.m.

Dentro de la Microcuenca, existen serios problemas ambientales que amenazan la supervivencia de la flora y fauna, problemas no solo antrópicas (caza furtiva, sobrepastoreo, etc), sino también Naturales, siendo demostrada mediante un trabajo de investigación denominado "Estudio De Calidad De Aguas De La Subcuenca Del Río Quillcay", realizada en Setiembre del 2005 por la RUA UNASAM HUARAZ, en la que se analizó la calidad de las aguas de todas las Microcuencas del Quillcay (Churup, Quillcayhuanca, Cojup y Shallap), encontrando serios problemas de contaminación fisicoquímica de origen natural, siendo los

An Urban Outdoor Classroom

parámetros químicos como el Al, Fe, Mn y Zn en todas las Quebradas de estudio, y Cu en la Quebrada Shallap, que sobrepasaban los LMP establecidos por la OMS, a causa de la deglaciación, meteorización de rocas y la actividad hídrica, generada por el calentamiento global de la tierra.

Lamentablemente los glaciares de la cordillera Blanca están sufriendo un proceso de retroceso continuo con avances muy críticos. Alterando la calidad de las aguas tanto de las microcuencas del Parque, atentando la supervivencia no solo de las flora y fauna sino también del Hombre.

Lo cierto es que día a día la biodiversidad en el mundo pelagra, siendo el hombre el principal agente destructor, ser más superior del mundo, pero inconciente e inmaduro en el pensar del futuro del mundo. Como jóvenes herederos de los pocos recursos naturales existentes y de los muchos problemas sociales y ambientales renovamos nuestro compromiso de seguir aportando con nuestra profesión y trabajo en el cambiar de esta terrible realidad.

La red universitaria ambiental con su aun poca experiencia plantea revertir la situación proponiendo a la Educación y Concientización Ambiental, como la base de solución a los problema ambientales mundiales, tema en el que proponemos trabajar. Puesto que es necesario tomar conciencia en cuanto maltrato a nuestro planeta. La preocupación, el interés y sobre todo el trabajo de los jóvenes por resolver los problemas ambientales, tomaran fuerza si todos contribuimos para cambiar el desastroso final de la tierra. "Recuerden que la casa del hombre se respeta y se valora".

¡EL CUIDADO DE LA VIDA ES NUESTRO PRINCIPAL FIN!

Red Universitaria Ambiental
RUA UNASAM HUARAZ

With the kind collaboration of
Aude Lecointe, 27



The Macoun Marsh is a wetland across the road from our school called Educarium in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Mr. Leveille, our creative science teacher, started a project to teach students ecology. After finding the marsh, and photo-

the Macoun Marsh is a really cool place because it is a small piece of land in a big city and has all these animals surviving in it. Imagine being a small animal in a big city, wow! I love to hold the frogs. It is really cool to see the students from Educarium

I think the Macoun Marsh is a really cool place because it is a small piece of land in a big city and has all these animals surviving in it.

graphing and identifying the first animal and plant species there, he realized that he could make learning a lot more interesting by using this place as an outdoor classroom. It is a classroom without walls. We could truly experience wildlife instead of just reading about it in books. We then invited nearby Jean Vanier Catholic School to join us as marsh guardians.

The Macoun Marsh got its name from a biologist whose name was John Macoun. He served as the Canadian Museum of Nature's first biologist in the late 1800's and the early 1900's. The marsh project makes students feel more responsible by caring for this wetland, and we inform people about this unique environment. If we do not protect our outdoor classroom, where would all that biodiversity find a home?

The Macoun Marsh is a great place to learn about nature. The marsh is so full of life that in one day we saw salamanders, chickadees, blue jays, turtles, snakes and frogs. We even saw a deer one day, right in the middle of a city at the Marsh. I think

at the marsh when we go there. The last time we visited the Marsh, Mr. Monaghan, our science teacher, had us look for biotic and abiotic components of the ecosystem, this was fun.

Seeing frogs and even a deer at the marsh is really cool. I wish I could see a salamander at the marsh, I have never seen one before and they live there. On my next trip I hope to see one. Some of the coolest things I have seen there are caterpillars, snails, slugs, many trees, cats, mushrooms and bees and bee hives and even a deer! The coolest thing ever was when Mr. Leveille helped us find a water scorpion! We also write down everything we see in our Nature Journals (slim books where we draw and write out our experiences at the marsh). All in all, going to the marsh so far has been a great experience.

By Grade 6 Educarium students Ethan Brady and Jasmine Cote
and Grade 7 Jean Vanier Catholic School students Gaby Denis, David Zayas-Chevel



The Main Outcomes of COP-8



So many decisions! With an entire planet to cover, and all the variety of living organisms to protect, it is no wonder that delegates from the 189 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted over three-dozen decisions while they met in the Brazilian city of Curitiba in the last two weeks of March 2006. What were these decisions about, and how do they affect my life?

The decisions of the Conference of the Parties (the group that makes decisions under the Convention) are all reached by consensus. Votes aren't counted for any decisions, but any countries that have a strong objection, have to have their voices heard. With a variety of opinions

and points of view among the countries that belong to the CBD, it is a real achievement to have reached an agreement.

Some of the most important decisions reached at the Curitiba meeting dealt with the biodiversity of islands, as well as that found in the drylands of our planet. Delegates also took significant decisions on traditional knowledge, on how to share the benefits from the use of our genetic resources, on taxonomy (the way we catalogue life) and on protected areas. Finally, the delegates made huge progress on communication, education and public awareness.

For people who live on islands, like the Caribbean, or the islands of Micronesia, the Curitiba meeting was a reason to take notice. Delegates agreed to a range of activities, research and policies that are designed to protect the fragile biodiversity of island ecosystems. This Programme of work on island biodiversity will be applied to ecosystems around the world.

The CBD also looked at ecosystems for

which the availability of water is an issue. Delegates looked at ways to strengthen the protection of the biodiversity of desert and dryland ecosystems, like the Namib Desert of southern Africa, or the Chihuahua desert of Mexico. These ecosystems are increasingly under threat from a variety of pressures, like climate change, overgrazing and other human pressures. As 2006 was also the international year of deserts, this activity was significant.

Recognising that the Convention will only be implemented if people are aware of the importance of biodiversity, and if this is communicated, the COP agreed to move forward on a programme of communication, education and public awareness, and created opportunities for the participation of youth in this. Where it is appropriate youth will serve on national advisory bodies, and special messages directed to youth will be created. Also, the Parties agreed

to create a variety of tools and electronic infrastructure to communicate with youth. This would include the development of a "Children's" website. This website should be produced in all UN languages, subject to the availability of funding, and

would include: i) background information on biodiversity and the Convention, contest announcements, quizzes, maps; ii) an "educators corner" with background information on the Convention and biodiversity, downloadable teachers aids, and possibly a forum where classrooms could share findings and achievements.

Finally, it should be noted that the COP invited the UN General Assembly to consider adopting a resolution on the proclamation of 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. Since the involvement of major stakeholders such as Children and Youth groups is an important component of international years, this presents a real opportunity for youth initiatives worldwide to embark on a 4-year programme of awareness raising activities and concrete biodiversity protection projects. By their nature, these international years, once declared as such by the General Assembly, provide dynamism and impetus to the actions undertaken by interested stakeholders.



Around the world, local and indigenous communities hold precious knowledge about biodiversity. Protecting this knowledge is an important part of the work of the CBD. Delegates adopted a decision that finds ways to protect traditional knowledge, and learn more about the ways that climate change will affect these communities

One of the best ways to conserve biodiversity is to create protected areas, places where species are given space from the pressures of human activity. The question of protected areas was very important at Cop-8, and youth spoke up in the plenary session in support of this. Delegates heard this and looked at ways to establish protected areas in the deepest parts of the ocean, far away from the national waters of Parties to the Convention. Creating and maintaining these protected areas takes money and expertise as well. Recognising this, delegates agreed to find ways to gather money and expertise to create these protected areas.



Courtesy of Brazil

Children and Youth have Powerful Impact on CBD's COP-8

In Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006, 4,700 delegates representing Parties and other governments, UN agencies, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, indigenous and local community organizations, industry, and academia agreed to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Children and youth groups were one of the loudest voices for the protection of the planet. The number and diversity of activities organized by youth demonstrated the importance the younger generation places on global environmental negotiations, and specifically as they relate to biodiversity. On the first day of the meeting, during the plenary session, representatives of **Greenpeace International Kids for Forests** stressed the importance of protected areas for the protection of forests and marine biodiversity, as well as the need to commit funds to biodiversity conservation. They urged the Conference of the Parties to take swifter action and more concrete steps towards achievement of the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

The large numbers of representatives of children and youth was welcomed by the Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif who met with many of them over the course of the meeting.

School children from Curitiba in colour-coordinated t-shirts re-created a huge human logo of the CBD on a large square in the centre of the city. This was a landmark symbol of civil society's involvement in the work of the Convention. It was a very imaginative approach used by children and youth groups in communicating the importance of working together to achieve common aims. The event also provided the ideal photo opportunity for the international media. This powerful image was seen the world over!

Youth made itself heard as a major stakeholder in the international biodiversity

regime as representatives took an active public role in plenary sessions and consultative groups. School children from the city of Curitiba had the opportunity to question delegates from around the world, and more than 1500 of them delivered a message to the Executive Secretary, which was then presented to His Excellency Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Republic of Brazil (see message below).

Dr. Djoghlaif also conveyed to the President a **Youth Declaration on Sustainable Development**, which stemmed from the "Mission-Durable" youth conference held in Montreal, Canada in February 2006 (see the declaration text on page 3). Both of the Montreal declaration and the Curitiba school children's message were mentioned by the Executive Secretary in his opening statement at the High Level Ministerial Segment.

Some of the most colourful messages were communicated by youth representatives. As a permanent reminder of their message that time is fast ticking towards the deadline for that target, they presented the Executive Secretary with a 2-meter high hourglass representing the rapid loss of biodiversity and the possibility for man to reduce this trend. The hourglass was left



Over 1500 school children from Curitiba create a likeness of the CBD logo in downtown Curitiba

"It was great to see the energy that these young participants communicated to the delegates during the meeting. Obviously, they were not just a breath of fresh air but also real turbines pushing that air around!"

Véronique Lefebvre,
Secretariat's Children and Youth Focal Point in Curitiba

in an open area of the convention centre during the final days of the negotiations for the delegates to observe.

Since Curitiba, a smaller version of the hourglass is displayed prominently, at the entrance to the Executive Secretary's office, just as the album of drawings offered by children during the meeting. Also, as a reminder of the colourful and dynamic contribution from children and youth at COP-8, Dr. Djoghlaif has placed in his office for all to view an album of drawings on biodiversity that was presented to him by children during the meeting.

At COP-8, the youth of the world clearly demonstrated that they not only care about the planet they will inherit, but that they have the determination to make a difference.



Small version of the hourglass presented to the Executive Secretary by youth representatives.

What's the COP?

The Convention has created a global forum where governments, non-governmental organizations, academics, the private sector, and other interested groups or individuals share ideas and compare strategies on conserving biodiversity and sustaining life. This is referred to as the Conference of the Parties or "COP". The COP is the Convention's ultimate authority and consists of all governments (and one regional economic integration organization - the European Union) that have ratified the treaty. There are a total of 189 Parties to the Convention and therefore to the COP. Only these Parties are allowed to vote in the decisions that are adopted during these meetings, which are held every two years. The next COP will be held in Bonn, Germany from 19-30 May, 2008.

Déclaration jeunesse de Montréal sur le développement durable

Nous, 300 jeunes du Québec, Canada, avec une délégation de jeunes Français, nous sommes réunis à Montréal quelques semaines après la conclusion de la dernière conférence des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques, pour réfléchir et échanger à propos du développement durable et pour proposer des pistes d'action collectives et individuelles afin que ce concept devienne réalité.

Chaque jour, par notre inaction, des espèces vivantes disparaissent. Nous connaissons les problèmes, nous connaissons certaines solutions, mais notre obsession pour la croissance économique nous empêche de passer des paroles à l'action. Malheureusement, nous constatons que la croissance du PIB est toujours en tête des priorités et que les questions d'environnement et de justice sociale apparaissent secondaires, comme si c'était la vie qui devait être au service de l'économie, et non l'inverse. Que l'on parle de croissance économique, de libéralisation des marchés, de création d'emplois, d'exploitation des ressources naturelles, quelle finalité tout cela peut-il avoir si, en cours de route, on détruit la vie et les écosystèmes qui sont le fruit de millions d'années d'évolution, si on épuise les ressources et contamine l'eau que l'on boit, l'air que l'on respire et nos sources de nourriture? La vie évolue à son propre rythme, qui n'est pas celui des trimestres financiers ou des mandats électoraux. Il faut cependant avoir le courage de prendre nos responsabilités face à la vie, celle de nos enfants et petits-enfants, celle des peuples plus vulnérables et celle de toutes les espèces qui sont interdépendantes et dont notre propre subsistance dépend. Pendant l'événement « MISSION : DURABLE, pour un développement dans le vent! » nous avons passé beaucoup de temps à apprendre : à entendre des spécialistes, à prendre connaissance des impacts des humains sur notre planète, mais aussi à apprendre quelle était notre part de responsabilité dans la mise en œuvre de solutions pour réduire ces impacts négatifs. Nous avons échangé nos points de vue sur les différents aspects du développement durable et nous avons proposé des pistes d'action concrètes. Enfin, nous avons



During COP-8, Ahmed Djoghlaif gave a copy of the Montreal Youth Declaration to Brazilian president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

signé un protocole de l'engagement par lequel nous nous sommes engagés à agir en conformité avec les grands principes du développement durable, à en apprendre davantage sur ce qu'il faut faire et à tout mettre en œuvre pour que cela soit fait. Nous nous sommes aussi engagés à impliquer les gens autour de nous afin que le développement durable devienne leur priorité et qu'ils posent eux aussi des gestes à leur portée.

Nos pistes d'action visent l'éducation, l'organisation de nos milieux de vie et le développement économique durable. Enfin, elles appellent à la mobilisation de tous. Il nous faut agir, citoyens, en solidarité et en concertation. Et vous, en faites-vous autant? Nous nous attendons à ce que nos dirigeants assument l'impact énorme de leurs décisions et indécisions et qu'ils prennent leurs responsabilités envers les humains et toutes les autres espèces vivantes. La durabilité doit passer du simple discours à une pratique incontournable, elle doit être omniprésente et prioritaire dans toutes les sphères d'intervention des États. La précaution est de mise quand on porte le poids des écosystèmes et de toutes les vies qu'ils impliquent.

Les scientifiques sont unanimes : nous n'avons plus le temps d'attendre. Il faut inciter et sensibiliser, mais les mesures volontaires doivent être accompagnées de mesures contraignantes pour formaliser l'importance du respect de la vie autour de soi. Il faut agir individuellement, mais il y a une limite à ce que l'individu peut

faire seul, tout comme il y a une limite à ce que la population peut faire sans l'aide de ses gouvernants. De leur côté, de nombreuses entreprises réalisent l'urgence de changer leurs méthodes afin d'assurer la durabilité. Elles y voient rentabilité et profitabilité non seulement économiques, mais aussi humaines et sociales. Ces entreprises, comme nous, implorent les dirigeants de les appuyer dans leurs démarches et de rappeler à l'ordre celles qui restent sourdes et aveugles.

Nous avons espoir que les choses changeront. Les mentalités évoluent et il devient de plus en plus difficile de faire l'autruche devant l'urgence de la situation. Nous, jeunes du Québec, sommes prêts à faire les changements nécessaires afin d'assurer la durabilité de nos modes de vie. En nous réunissant, nous unissons nos aspirations et nous affirmons, avec raison et avec cœur, par nos paroles et nos actions, que la durabilité est notre priorité parce que la vie est notre priorité.

Déjà, nous changeons nos habitudes de vie de mille façons et nous constatons que le monde est prêt à accueillir un nouvel ordre des choses, où chaque citoyen pourra évoluer tout en respectant son environnement et ses semblables. Nous attendons avec impatience le moment où vous oserez poser les actions qui nous permettront de célébrer ensemble la beauté de la vie, la beauté de notre monde et la fierté que nous éprouvons à partager cette beauté avec tous les êtres humains, avec les générations futures et avec toutes les formes de vie qui font de notre Terre ce qu'elle est, telle que nous la respectons. Il faut que tous les pays du monde passent ensemble de la parole aux actes. Nous avons parlé : maintenant, ensemble, agissons!

Les participants au colloque MISSION : DURABLE, pour un développement dans le vent!

This text is a transcript of the Montreal Youth Declaration on Sustainable Development. It is the result of a youth conference attended by 300 young people dedicated to the cause of sustainable development. To ensure the continuity of life on Earth, these young people stated that sustainability and life is their priority. They request that the world, including politicians and decision-makers, come together to act in preserving the Earth and the life that shapes it.

Message des élèves de Curitiba

Nous, les élèves des écoles municipales de Curitiba, voulons assumer un compromis d'amour envers les générations de l'avenir. Nous savons que nous sommes petits et que, au regard de beaucoup de gens, nos actions peuvent paraître insignifiantes. Mais, nous sommes sûrs que, à travers des attitudes responsables et simples, nous pouvons contribuer pour le bonheur de la Planète qui a besoin d'aide.

À l'école, nous apprenons avec nos maîtres que la préservation de la biodiversité est fondamentale pour l'équilibre

et la stabilité des écosystèmes. La biodiversité est la base des activités humaines et une source importante pour la biotechnologie, par conséquent, une source de richesse économique. Elle est essentielle pour la survie humaine. Ainsi, nous irons essayer de rechercher, auprès des organismes responsables, des actions dirigées à la solution des problèmes



Courtesy of Brazil

Ahmed Djoghlaif (Executive Secretary of the CBD), Marina Silva (Brazilian Minister of the Environment) and Carlos Alberto Richa (Curitiba Mayor) with the children of Curitiba, Brazil.

et la conscientisation des gens. Tout le monde a besoin de savoir que des mesures simples, comme économiser les ressources naturelles et avoir des habitudes correctes, comme éviter le gaspillage d'aliments ou d'autres matériaux - inclusive des matériaux des écoliers; la réduction de la consommation d'eau et d'énergie électrique; la préservation de la faune et de la flore;

s'occuper du sol et des rivières; séparer les ordures et utiliser les moyens de transport collectifs peut être essentiel pour la survie de toutes les espèces sur la Terre.

Si chacun fait sa part, avec responsabilité, la Nature va réussir et les êtres humains aussi, une fois que nous sommes parts intégrantes d'elle.

NOUS SOMMES BIO,
NOUS SOMMES LA DIVERSITÉ!
NOUS SOMMES HUMAINS,
EN RÉALITÉ!

Les élèves des écoles municipales de Curitiba, Brazil

This is a transcript of the message of the children of Curitiba, given to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on biological diversity during COP-8. In this message, the children commit to doing their part in reducing their impact on biodiversity and in engaging others to do so as well.

Students Model WTO-CBD Negotiations on TRIPS

The International Student Organization for Sustainable Economics and Management, Oikos International, has made biodiversity a key topic in its annual simulation of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The mock negotiations, held since 1997 in the beautiful setting of St-Gallen's rolling countryside (Switzerland), simulates a Ministerial Conference to demonstrate how trade rules are shaped by the negotiations of WTO members. In 2006, the week long event attracted students from over 30 countries to debate on the further development of the world trade system in relation to the CBD. Organizers structured the negotiations around the imitation of the Committee on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The Committee adopted for example the following recommendation:

"Members shall ensure that the granting of a patent relating to biological materials or to traditional knowledge is contingent upon the presentation of proof of the following conditions:



[...]

iii) evidence of fair and equitable benefit sharing, taking into account the Bonn Guidelines, which shall be provided by a contract between the patent applicant and the government owning the biological resources or [associated] traditional knowledge."

The objective of the event is to raise awareness among students all around the world on sustainability in international trade. Presented to WTO and UNCTAD experts, adopted resolutions were said to be pretty

close to what certain countries would want the TRIPS Agreement to look like. Experts mentioned that the resolution went directly to the crux of the issue. Instead of getting lost in details, student participants decided to opt for consensus, a difficult task in real-life. For Thomas Petruschke, 25, Executive Director, another lesson of the Model is that despite the obvious lack of experience, participants confront the same problems delegates deal with. One of them is to achieve results with a high flow of complex information. For Barbara Gaehwiler, 24, chair of the committee, the reality check undertaken by the experts was the highlight of the event.

Interestingly, Parties to the Convention have emphasized the need to further explore this interrelationship. The work of the CBD, like that of Oikos International, is part of a broader effort by the international community to ensure harmony and mutual supportiveness between trade rules and international environmental law.

Hans Haake, 22, Germany

Biodiversity and Climate Change - Facts

The people of Funafuti, Tuvalu, are lobbying to find new homes: saltwater intrusion has made groundwater undrinkable and the islands are suffering increasing impacts from hurricanes and heavy seas. When they disappear, not only will a unique culture vanish, but the Funafuti Marine Conservation Area will be dramatically altered by the loss of surface reefs.



©Somese Alefaio
Fualopa, one of the islets included in the Funafuti Conservation Area

In Finland, breeding Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) laid progressively larger eggs through the period 1975-1993,

correlating with rises in mean spring temperatures. Since larger eggs enjoy improved hatching success, global warming may allow females to alter their reproductive strategy and invest more resources in reproduction.

Warming affects cold seas and polar communities as well. Decreased weight in polar bears, which can lead to decreased adult fitness and reproductive success, in the Hudson Bay area of Canada is attributed to earlier spring ice break-up and consequent loss of two weeks



©Amanda Graham
Polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*)

of hunting.

Climate change associated with an El Niño/Southern Oscillation-related drought in 1986/7 is thought to be a cause of amphibian losses in the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve in Costa Rica. The golden toad (*Bufo perigrinus*) and the harlequin frog (*Atelopus varius*) disappeared, and four other frog and two lizard species suffered population crashes. A detailed survey in a 30 square kilometre study site found that 20 out of 50 frog and toad species disappeared at that time.



©Khosey T / flickr.com
Harlequin frog (*Atelopus varius*)

Biodiversity and Climate Change - Puzzle

A puzzle of key words that describe climate change and its relation and interaction with the Earth's biological diversity.

i	a	o	v	o	a	i	s	t	g	s	r	t	e	c	e	h	h	p	m
m	l	t	g	r	s	e	r	a	i	n	f	a	l	l	m	e	o	i	i
n	d	v	r	a	i	d	r	w	t	o	n	i	n	v	a	s	i	v	e
h	f	a	e	c	t	d	i	u	e	a	m	i	p	g	p	i	n	l	e
e	a	d	e	f	o	r	e	s	t	a	t	i	o	n	r	e	g	x	i
e	g	p	n	c	a	d	a	p	t	a	t	i	o	n	o	a	c	m	a
g	s	l	h	a	l	b	a	e	b	r	r	h	b	l	r	n	h	h	i
i	r	y	o	r	d	g	c	g	g	o	i	e	e	a	n	a	c	s	r
o	u	t	u	b	r	h	b	e	s	n	p	b	p	r	h	n	f	n	i
h	p	i	s	o	a	e	r	n	g	r	a	e	u	m	s	e	n	a	d
s	r	s	e	n	y	l	i	l	o	n	r	h	t	t	e	o	y	i	a
l	a	r	g	d	s	c	w	d	s	i	i	e	c	r	i	t	d	b	h
r	h	e	a	i	m	y	u	a	n	m	t	h	l	t	i	o	s	i	r
r	v	v	s	o	e	c	w	n	r	a	a	a	c	s	h	h	n	h	b
m	o	i	e	x	t	n	v	r	i	m	r	n	r	a	e	a	c	p	f
n	g	d	s	i	s	o	e	a	e	o	i	e	g	g	e	m	r	m	t
n	v	o	v	d	y	b	o	r	c	t	v	n	r	r	i	l	o	a	e
n	t	i	i	e	s	r	x	s	x	i	a	h	g	e	o	m	b	i	s
l	t	b	d	i	o	a	t	e	d	v	g	v	l	o	n	v	t	u	b
y	a	c	b	u	c	c	c	i	a	u	o	o	v	l	b	f	e	g	m
r	a	g	r	a	e	b	r	a	l	o	p	e	d	e	a	m	n	s	i

Climate change
coral reefs
species
greenhouse gases
invasive
biomes
productivity

biodiversity
polar bear
diversity
global warming
distribution
carbon dioxide
deforestation

habitat
temperature
migration
change
weather
extinction
carbon cycle

adaptation
rainfall
amphibians
bleaching
ecosystems
mangroves

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Comments and suggestions for future columns are welcome and should be addressed to the editors.

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