

**APPEAL OF THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOR
INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY DAY, MAY 22, 2018**

Theme: Celebrating 25th Years of Action for Biodiversity



The United Nations have proclaimed May 22 as International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB), to increase the understanding and awareness of the biodiversity issues. The theme of the Day is: **Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity**. The theme was chosen to mark the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to highlight the progress made in the achievement of its objectives at the national and global levels.

Protecting Biodiversity is in our self-interest. Biological resources are the pillars upon which we build civilizations. Nature's products support such diverse industries as agriculture, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, pulp and paper, horticulture, construction and waste treatment. The loss of biodiversity threatens our food supplies, opportunities for recreation and tourism, and sources of wood, medicines and energy. It also interferes with essential ecological functions. The current decline in biodiversity is largely the result of human activity and represents a serious threat to human development. Despite mounting efforts over the past 20 years, the loss of the world's biological diversity, mainly from habitat destruction, over-harvesting, pollution and the inappropriate introduction of foreign plants and animals have continued. Biological resources constitute a capital asset with great potential for yielding sustainable benefits. Urgent and

decisive action is needed to conserve and maintain genes, species and ecosystems, with a view to the sustainable management and use of biological resources.

Organizing an event to Celebrating 25 Years IBD day in your schools and do to highlight biodiversity conservation issues, including:

- ✓ Organize an event for local farmers to come and talk to the community about their biodiversity conservation.
- ✓ Create awareness through drawing competition at school level, describing the importance of biodiversity to your local area.
- ✓ Choose an area of your local environment that is in need of restoration, such as a stand of local trees, a river area, a lake, an area that is home to a rare species and target it for restoration and conservation.
- ✓ Creating awareness among the public on Tree planting.

On this Biological Diversity Day, I urge all of you to take effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide the essential services, thereby securing the planet's variety of life and contributing to human well-being and poverty eradication. To ensure this, pressures on biodiversity to be reduced, ecosystems to be restored, biological resources to be sustainably used and benefits arising out of utilization of genetic resources to be shared in a fair and equitable manner; adequate financial resources should be provided, capacities to be enhanced, biodiversity issues

and values mainstreamed, appropriate policies should be effectively implemented and decision-making is based on sound science and the precautionary approach.

I once again urge all communities to join us to celebrate 25 years of Action for Biodiversity.

Director of Environment