



**International Chamber of Commerce**

*The world business organization*

**Opening Statement for COP-9  
19 May 2008**

**Statement read by Annik Dollacker, Co-Chair of the ICC Task Force on CBD**

Thank you Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce and its associated industry federations and companies.

The ICC is the voice of world business, serving as the official partner of the United Nations and its agencies to work towards sustainable development. We have been involved in the CBD since its inception and participate in meetings of the CBD with increasing numbers of delegates. We welcome a spirit of open discussion, engagement and transparency during the two weeks to come and our desire is to have access to all phases of the negotiations.

The issues addressed at this COP's session require prioritized, concerted and integrated actions by all stakeholders. Business is central to bringing investments, technologies, solutions and services to bear for progress on the inter-woven issues at stake. We seek to contribute our expertise - among other things - to discussions at this meeting on sustainable agriculture, the ecosystem approach, technology transfer and cooperation, access and benefit sharing, protected areas, and invasive alien species.

Mr. Chairman, the ICC places high priority on current efforts to refine the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity. The business community is convinced that there is no rational alternative to increasing yields per hectare - as land is finite - and we are optimistic that this can be achieved in a sustainable way, expanding and scaling up known practices, technologies, and products.

Given the private sector's critical role in technology transfer and scientific and technological cooperation, the ICC looks forward to being a partner in work aimed at eliminating obstacles and facilitating both access to and adoption of technologies with the necessary accompanying know-how.

Concerning access and benefit sharing, we support sector specific approaches that will promote access and benefit sharing by providing increased certainty and transparency. It is clear to us that if access is restricted unnecessarily through bureaucratic, one-size-fits-all approaches, then the flow of benefits also will be curtailed.

In closing, may I draw your attention to ICC's exhibit focusing on replicating and expanding winning solutions for sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation. Also on 22 May - to celebrate the International Biodiversity Day - the ICC will hold a side event on how to integrate biodiversity conservation into sustainable agricultural production. We hope to see you at our booth, number 85, and at our side event on Thursday - and look forward to fruitful discussions during this week.

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