



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

**ICC Intervention at the High Level Segment on behalf of the business delegation, 28 May 2008
UN CBD 9th Conference of the Parties (COP) Meeting, High Level Segment, Bonn, Germany**

Intervention Presented by Annik Dollacker

Thank you Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce. ICC serves as an umbrella organization for various business sectors at this meeting. The sectors include agriculture, extractive industries such as oil and gas, plant breeding, industrial biotechnology, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals as well as the ornamental fish and pet industry, which joined to contribute efforts in the protection against invasive alien species.

ICC's role at the CBD is to coordinate business interests and to provide information, expertise and technical knowledge to inform delegates of the implications of policy decisions under consideration. These business activities moves us well beyond mere showcasing.

We sincerely thank the Executive Secretary of the CBD for his leadership in promoting the engagement of business among other stakeholders. For our part we are actively considering different ways to further support the objectives of the Convention. In the broader context we have for instance agreed to use our world-wide network to promote greater participation in GreenWave, a tree-planting program for schools. We also hope to cooperate with the next Host Government, Japan, on an innovative technology fair at COP-10. We see this as a practical and effective way in support of technology transfer and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman, the business community places high priority on playing a proactive role in ongoing discussions on the development of the International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing. We welcome the fact that an increasing amount of Parties are in favour of a more flexible, sectoral approach. We have highlighted industry's need for legal certainty, predictability and transparency. With our unique technical expertise, we stand ready to provide multiple experts in meetings established by Parties to provide inputs to the negotiations over the next two years.

An ABS regime that acknowledges the interdependency of Genetic Resources across nations and incorporates critical sectoral differences would therefore be the most effective tool. It would ensure the creation of meaningful benefits from the sustainable use of genetic resources and create opportunities not just for business, but also for consumers and local communities.

International Chamber of Commerce

38 Cours Albert 1er, 75008 Paris, France
Tel +33 (0)1 49 53 28 28 Fax +33 (0)1 49 53 28 59
E-mail icc@iccwbo.org Website www.iccwbo.org

1
28 May 2008



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

ICC also places high priority on efforts to refine the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity in line with the ecosystem approach. Agriculture not only relates to food security and poverty alleviation, it also uses about 40% of the land. Hence, biodiversity conservation needs to be integrated into agricultural production. A mosaic of solutions exists. We highlighted some of them in our side event last week. These solutions must be expanded and replicated to bridge the substantial production gap between yields in some developing countries and those of the developed world to meet the escalating food demands. Business is committed to continue to spearhead research and development for innovative technological solutions, plant breeding - including green biotechnology - and to promote sustainable agriculture management approaches like integrated farming.

We view biofuels production as one element of agricultural production, and are concerned that ongoing discussions on the matter distracts from the responsibility to address the core issue of the Agricultural Work. Biofuel production amounts to 5% of the total global cereal production. It is an integral part of the evolution of agriculture towards producing raw materials for a bio-based economy and must therefore be as sustainable and efficient as other uses of agriculture. Therefore biofuels should remain an integral part of the agricultural biodiversity work programme of the CBD.

Concerning genetically modified trees, we note that promising research is taking place in some 20 countries, half of which are in Europe. This research may lead, among other things, to improved carbon sequestration and restoration of native species through pest and disease resistance.

The oil and gas sector recognizes that maintenance of an effective system of protected areas is essential for biodiversity conservation. Many companies are therefore contributing to the Program of Work on Protected Areas. A notable example is the recent support of improvements of the World Database on Protected Areas in joint collaboration with UNEP-WCMC.

In closing, we thank you for considering the role of ICC and its contributions to important issues. For our part we continue to support the objective of the Conventions, provide information, expertise and technical knowledge to support delegates in reaching informed decisions.