

Media Update-2

22 May 2018

United Nations

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

International Day for Biological Diversity

22 May 2018

The rich variety of life on Earth is essential for the welfare and prosperity of people today and for generations to come. That is why, 25 years ago, the world's nations agreed on the Convention for Biological Diversity. The Convention has three goals: the global conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use and the equitable sharing of its benefits. Achieving these objectives is integral to meet our goals for sustainable development.

Protecting and restoring ecosystems and ensuring access to ecosystem services are necessary for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Reducing deforestation and land degradation and enhancing carbon stocks in forests, drylands, rangelands and croplands are needed for mitigating climate change. And protecting the biodiversity of forests and watersheds supports clean and plentiful water supplies.

These are just some of the benefits of biodiversity. Yet, despite this understanding, biodiversity loss continues around the globe. The answer is to intensify efforts and build on successes.

This year, Parties to the Convention will begin work on a new action plan to ensure that, by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used for the benefit of all people. The entire world needs to join this effort. On this International Day for Biological Diversity, I urge governments, businesses and people everywhere to act to protect the nature that sustains us. Our collective future depends on it.



FAO

Press Release

FAO stresses the need for a National Biotechnologies Policy and provincial strategies in Pakistan

The world marks 22 May as the International Day for Biological Diversity. Today, there is an array of agricultural biotechnologies available that contribute to ensuring food and nutrition security in agri based economies around the world. However, there are still a wide range of issues related to agricultural biotechnologies including investments, dissemination, adoption and use, regulation, policies, intellectual property rights, nutrition and climate change that need to be addressed urgently.

Advances in Agricultural Biotechnology and Regulatory Affairs,

As part of its commitment to biodiversity, FAO is supporting countries in creating good governance, enabling frameworks and stewardship incentives to include biodiversity in all agendas. Although agricultural biotechnology has made significant strides in Pakistan, there is a need for better coordination and collaboration to promote knowledge sharing of ideas, scientific advances and practices.

There is a need to showcase and exchange knowledge on current research activities in biotechnology underway in universities and R&D institutions in Pakistan.

Government efforts in this regard are praiseworthy. National Biosafety Committee under the Ministry of Climate Change has started functioning in the field of commercialization.

Need for National Biotechnologies Policy and Strategy in Pakistan

The first steps towards the development of a strategic plan and in identifying opportunities of using biotechnologies that would benefit small holder farmers are welcome since these would help modernize agriculture sustainably in Pakistan and achieve food security and economic growth, while helping adapt to climate change.



Ms Minà Dowlatchahi, reiterating FAO's support said: "FAO stands ready to support efforts by providing legal and technical advice on areas such as intellectual property rights and facilitation of innovative modalities to support change in farmers' practices and behaviour in the adoption of relevant biotechnologies"

She also said that that the draft National Food Security Policy provides the framework for a national strategy for the development and application of biotechnology in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and livestock. Establishing priorities within the broad context of Pakistan agriculture research needs and policies is key to identifying best suited biotechnologies that benefit small holders and poor farmers. This should also take into account all possible negative impacts and benefits including loss of biodiversity and famers' access to quality inputs, she added.

FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Asia – Pacific

In September last year, about 200 representatives of governments, intergovernmental organizations, private sector entities, academia and research institutions and civil society and producer organizations met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the FAO Regional Meeting on Agriculture Biotechnologies in Asia – Pacific. The meeting encompassed a wide spectrum of available biotechnology in different sectors and showcased experiences from various countries.
