



# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY  
PROTECT BIODIVERSITY IN DRYLANDS

**22 May  
2006**



ACHIEVING THE 2010 TARGET!

## School Report: International Day for Biological Diversity 2006

In honor of this year's International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) has continued to build on the success of the school outreach program. The SCBD contacted several Montreal Area schools and offered them a biodiversity-related presentation, which focused on "Protecting Biodiversity in Drylands."

### Choice of schools

There were no set guidelines to follow when choosing a school, although key factors were:

- 1) availability and interest
- 2) environmental concerns
- 3) overall academic profile which encourages students to play an interactive role with the educators
- 4) Schools already involved in greening projects

### Presentations were made to the following schools:

- Moving in New Directions (M.I.N.D.)
- Royal Vale Academy
- Roslyn Elementary School

Presentations were made in both English and French to approximately 200 students ranging between 11-16 years of age. A short video introduced the students to the "Myriad forms of Life on Earth known as Biodiversity." Staff members then began their lectures by giving a brief introduction on answering the "5 W's":

- What is biodiversity,
- Why it is important to preserve it,
- Who benefits from ecosystem services,
- Where can biodiversity be found, and
- What can we do to live sustainably.

Staff members engaged students in a lively question and answer period, provoking their curiosity on the importance of preserving biodiversity. Students were quite familiar with the environmental threats facing our world today, and were very keen to understand what the CBD is doing to help solve the environmental problems we all face.

A power point presentation highlighting dryland life was another very successful tool used to introduce students to drylands around the world. Pictures of plants and animals endemic to these mysterious lands sparked vivid tales of how they survive on very little water, and how these



species adapt to a climate that is often unforgiving. Dryland species also acted as teaching tools to describe the complex interactions between life on Earth.

Fact Sheets prepared by the Secretariat were given to the teachers to use as teaching material.

The Secretariat recognizes the importance of promoting increased awareness of the value of biodiversity, and the impact of its loss on our everyday lives. We hope that the active participation of enlightened educators world wide will enable us to reach our goal of conveying biodiversity messages that not only contribute to public knowledge, but also 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.

Taking this opportunity, the Secretariat would like to thank all the teachers for their assistance and collaboration and for allowing us this opportunity to disseminate the message about the diversity of life and its importance in maintaining the life support systems on earth.

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.