

**REPORT ON GLOBAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY
FEBRUARY**

As the momentum continues to build around the International Year the Secretariat is pleased to share with you the highlights of the events that took place in the month of February. Governments and organizations alike held IYB celebrations throughout the month. Eight official IYB launches took place – seven in countries and one organized by UNDP in New York. In addition, different IYB related activities were held and organized in different parts of the world. The Secretariat is monitoring closely through Google News the articles related to the IYB and biodiversity related stories. To date the English site has generated 1,830,000 hits, the French search has generated 298 news stories and the Spanish has 467 news items on the International Year. The Facebook page now has over 22 000 fans and we are pleased to inform you that we have over 120 Partners and counting that are helping us to celebrate the International Year. Since the beginning of the International Year the Secretariat has set up an IYB email account to respond to Biodiversity queries to date we have received over 2500 requests for the use of the IYB logo and requests keep coming in. Details of what the world is doing throughout the Year can be found at : <http://www.cbd/int/2010/celebrations>

1 February South Africa: Speaking at the official launch of the International Year of Biodiversity in Pretoria, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs H.E. Ms Buyelwa Sonjica has called on South Africans to unite in a global alliance to protect life on Earth by investing in biodiversity.

1-5 February Trondheim Over 300 participants attending the sixth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity celebrated IYB (www.trondheimconference.org/).

During this important meeting, Norway officially launched the Year at a special event with the Minister of Environment H.E. Mr. Erik Solheim, Ms. Angela Cropper and Mr. Ahmed Djoghla. The official IYB promotional video was showed during the official launch.

2 February World Wetlands Day for 2010 was celebrated under the theme Biodiversity and Climate Change under the slogan “Caring for wetlands- an answer to climate change”. This is in recognition of the impact climate change has on biodiversity and wetlands. http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities--world-wetlands-day-2010-24351/main/ramsar/1-63-78%5E24351_4000_0

2 February New exhibition revealing the biodiversity, complexity and splendor of Canada's aquatic is sure to make a splash. Canada's Waterscapes-Yours to Enjoy, Explore and Protect opened on February 2, 2010, at the Biosphere in Montreal, Quebec, Canada in honor of the International Year of Biodiversity.

February 2, 2010. Extremadura, Spain. As part of the celebrations of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, the Extremadura Network of Rural Development (REDEX) has as an objective to empower knowledge and conservation of the great biological and ecological diversity of the region of Extremadura.

In this regard, REDEX will develop a series of activities directed for the diffusion of the value of the regional fauna with the objective of encouraging its conservation. Amongst them, will be the REDEX in FIO stand, which will display informational material on the twenty-four Extremeños Local Action Groups. http://www.regiondigital.com/periodico/extremadura/redex_promocionara_los_humedales_en_la_fio_2010-115468.html

2 February Wellington Zoo goes green for the International Year of Biodiversity. Edy MacDonald, Manager Conservation and Sustainability at Wellington Zoo, said: “This year at the Zoo we want to show our visitors that making small changes to their lives really can make a difference to improving the biodiversity of their neighbourhood. At the Zoo’s launch of the International Year of Biodiversity all animal talks on the day will incorporate a different biodiversity theme and a range of fun environmental activities for all visitors. Zoo staff will also be explaining why these activities are important in terms of enhancing the biodiversity of New Zealand. <http://www.wellingtonzoo.com/net/news/article.aspx?id=88>

4 February New Delhi: The IYB was launched at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2010, an annual global event attended by several heads of the states and CEOs of companies. The event was organized jointly by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and UNESCO.

4 February: The Council of Foreign Relations of Montreal organized a “dejeuner-causerie” on the International Year of Biodiversity and was attended by over 300 participants.

4 February The Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland published a Biodiversity Action Plan to coincide with World Wetland Day on 2 February. It is the first State Agency in Ireland to produce its own Action Plan to mark International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The Plan sets out specific actions that will be undertaken by the EPA, working in collaboration with its key partners, to assist in the conservation of Ireland’s biological. The production of this Action Plan should make a significant contribution to highlighting the importance of biodiversity for public policy during International Year of Biodiversity. The report can be downloaded from the EPA’s website at <http://www.epa.ie/>.

5 February In Merseyside, UK the Cheshire region Biodiversity Partnership (CrBP) is working hard to help safeguard biodiversity through on the ground action. As part of this, Cheshire Wildlife Trust are leading on the Gowy and Mersey Wetlands Project, the Environment Agency and WREN, which aims to create a network of wetland habitats which will benefit local wildlife as well as people and the economy. Sarah Bennett, Cheshire region Biodiversity Manager said: “The International Year of Biodiversity will help people to understand what ‘biodiversity’ is and why it’s important for a healthy environment.

<http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/environment/environmental-news/2010/02/05/merseyside-embraces-year-of-biodiversity-100252-25765887/>

7 February Top-rating Philippine AM radio station DZMM featured the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) on Sunday, 07 February 2010, 4:30 P.M. at DZMM Teleradyo. ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Executive Director Rodrigo U. Fuentes provided an overview of the International Year of Biodiversity – a global celebration with the theme “Biodiversity is life, Biodiversity is our life.”_ He highlighted the importance of biodiversity and the consequences of its loss. Ms. Angelita P. Meniado, supervising ecosystem management specialist of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau of the Philippines’ Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, spoke about the countries’ various activities lined up for IYB.

9 February The government of Canada and the governments of the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador signed a memorandum of understanding to create a new Mealy Mountains National Park. Larger than Yellowstone National Park, the new Canadian park will span 11,000 square kilometres making it the largest protected area in Eastern Canada. "As we enter into the International Year of Biodiversity, it is fitting that we are working to establish a national park to protect this spectacular boreal landscape for all time for all Canadians," said Canada's Environment Minister, Jim Prentice, in announcing the creation of the park.

9 February The Minister for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, Marco Schank, of Luxemburg presented the program of the International Year of Biodiversity. Nationally, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, in close collaboration with some thirty-partner organizations, will implement a program of events and a series of publications and contests as primary objective to encourage the discovery of kind of awareness on the threats posed by the loss of biodiversity and the benefits to reap if we protect and promote the sense of urgency to act. In concrete terms, 2010 will mark including the launch of a permanent monitoring of biodiversity in order to strengthen our knowledge on the subject. Furthermore, biodiversity will be a key theme of the partnership for environment and climate and conclusions of multiparty debates concerning the nature and biodiversity adopted in this context as the basis for the first revision of the National Plan for Protection Nature in 2011. http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle_presse/actualite/2010/02-fevrier/09-biodiversite/2010.

10 February Chef Robbie Robertson gave his support to the Scottish Government's 'Eat Fresh, Eat Seasonal' initiative which is encouraging people to support Scotland's food and drink industry by eating food that is in season and to take notice of where their food actually comes from. Buying seasonal is also one of the things people can do to help nature as part of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity Campaign. http://thegovmonitor.com/world_news/britain/success-for-scotlands-latest-campaign-eat-fresh-eat-seasonal-with-chef-robbie-robertson-23624.html

10 February , New York: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the American Museum of Natural History organized the North American IYB launch in the presence of over 400 participants. The Discovery Channel in collaboration with the BBC announced the launch of the 'Life' documentary, which includes 11 episodes and will air in March (http://equatorinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=577:iyblaunch&catid=119&Itemid=650&lang=en).

10 February Wildscreen patron Sir David Attenborough yesterday unveiled ARKive's 'Most Wanted' 2010 challenge - to track down films and photos of 17,000 of the world's most endangered plants and animals. With the help of the world's best filmmakers, photographers and scientists, ARKive has already profiled 6,000 of the world's species, including many of our most charismatic and familiar animals: gorillas, lions, tigers and elephants. Now in 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity, we're delving deeper into the weird and wonderful to unmask the mysterious life forms that hide behind names like the major black millipede, jewelled toad and Marley's golden mole. <http://www.arkive.org/>

11 February The Phu My Lepironia Project, a conservation initiative in Vietnam, was introduced at a press conference of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in New York. UNDP said that the project was introduced due to its success in combining natural preservation with improving people's living conditions, thus increasing the sustainability of bio-diversity conservation.

11 February The Isle of Man has signed up as a partner to help celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity. Events will be run throughout by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, in partnership with various other organizations on the Island. They will aim to raise awareness of the variety

of life on the Island, the importance of protecting biodiversity and how habitats that shape our landscapes are home to a wealth of plants and wildlife. www.manxradio.com/newsread.aspx?id=42629

11 February The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew “Riots of Colour” extravaganza kicks off Kew's Year of Biodiversity, a programme of events celebrating the importance of plants to all its visitors to coincide with the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity. <http://www.kew.org/>

11 February The meeting “Is Biodiversity really under pressure?” was held at the Linnean Society. This was a joint meeting between the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and the Linnean Society of London organized by Dr Peter Bridgewater FLS (JNCC) and Dr Sandy Knapp FLS. The meeting included speeches by guest speakers on five categories of pressure that were identified in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: Habitat Loss, Pollution, Climate Change, Non- Native Species and Over Exploitation. <http://www.linnean.org/>

11 February Mayor Melamed of Whistler was part of a press conference at the Whistler Media Centre that included the Resort Municipality of Whistler, the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Olympic Committee and the Vancouver 2010 Organizing Committee initiated Whistler's 2010 Biodiversity Challenge and included a staff member from the Secretariat. The challenge was in response to 2010 being declared the International Year of Biodiversity by the United Nations.

11 February Belgium: On the occasion of St. Valentine 's Day and as part of the International Year of Biodiversity, le Parti écologiste (green party) members have distributed 100,000 packets of wildflower seeds from regional control. The very successful Ecolo campaign "St. Valentrain" targeted commuters at the stations in Walloon and Brussels to thank them for their part in protecting the environment.

<http://www.7sur7.be/7s7/fr/2666/Ma-Vie-En-Vert/article/detail/1066405/2010/02/11/Demain-c-est-la-Saint-Valentrain.dhtml>

13-14 February As part of the International Year of Biodiversity and coinciding with the Chinese New Year's “Year of the Tiger” celebrations were held at Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park. The plight of the tiger over the last 100 years shows only too well the reduction in the variety of species. In the early 1900s there were 8 species of tiger. Now it is believed that only 4 remain. In partnership with the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, various biodiversity activities were held using beautiful stamps as illustrations at both venues.

February 14, 2010. Durango, Mexico. The conference that launched the celebrations for the International Year of Biodiversity was repeated on February 18, 2010 in the Antonio Narro Agrarian University. The conference, titled “Biodiversity, National Security Resource” and led by Dr. Jose Gamaliel Castañeda, sought to link students with the true situation that global biodiversity faces, and is part of the celebrations of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity that doctors and other specialists of Durango and Coahuila are doing together.

<http://www.milenio.com/node/382087>

15 February Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts the Hon Peter Garrett MP, launched Bush Blitz - a pioneering three-year multimillion dollar partnership to document the plants and animals in properties across Australia's National Reserve System. "In this International Year of Biodiversity, Bush Blitz scientists will provide the baseline data that will help us protect our biodiversity. This is an investment in science-based decision making that will pay off for generations to come. <http://www.bushblitz.org.au/news.php>

15 February In honor of the International Year of Biodiversity, the launch of the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science (QCBS) couldn't have been timed better. Hosted by McGill's Department of Biology, the virtual centre brings together more than 60 scientists from eight academic institutions (McGill, Bishop's, Concordia, Université de Montréal, Université du Québec à Rimouski, Université du Québec à Montréal, Université Laval and Université de Sherbrooke) in collaboration with the Montreal Botanical Garden and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The QCBS's aim is to provide a source of research and training excellence in order to foster biodiversity science for the scientific community, government and the general public of Quebec. The research is set up on three axes: to discover new biodiversity, especially in the Canadian North; to find the causes of and consequences of biodiversity changes, and determine the impact of extinctions and invasive species; and, finally, to determine how biodiversity loss impacts the social sciences, such as economics, since many economies depend on the environment.

<http://publications.mcgill.ca/reporter/2010/02/with-andrew-gonzalez-director-of-the-quebec-centre-for-biodiversity-science/>

17 February For the first time in 15 years Queenslanders will have the chance to view an extraordinary array of the state's beautiful butterflies, beetles and moths at Queensland Museum South Bank, marking the International Year of Biodiversity. Opening on 17 February, The Butterfly Man of Kuranda is a spectacular and historic insect exhibition showcasing the Museums F.P. & A.P. Dodd Collection of Tropical Insects from Australia and New Guinea. The exhibition focuses on 28 beautifully-arranged showcases dating from 1917 through to the 1960s. <http://www.southbank.qm.qld.gov.au/>

17 February The WA Scientific community gathered at Curtin University on Friday night for the official launch of support for the International Year of Biodiversity. Prof. Beazley described current research projects aimed at finding hundreds of new species in WA and the Department of Environment and Conservation's new eco-education program, which is providing curriculum-linked hands-on learning programs within the environment.

http://www.sciencewa.net.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2967:2010-international-year-of-biodiversity&catid=192:News&Itemid=200073

17 February Rwanda Named Global Host of World Environment Day 2010. This year's theme is 'Many Species. One Planet. One Future.' - a message focusing on the central importance to humanity of the globe's wealth of species and ecosystems. The WED theme also supports this year's UN International Year of Biodiversity.

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=612&ArticleID=6464&l=en>

18 February The International Year of Biodiversity was officially launched in the Maldives by Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan Manik, Vice President of the Republic of Maldives in a ceremony held on the 18th of February. The ceremony was held at the Sultan's Park of Male', Maldives, from 9:00am to 10:00am, which was followed by biodiversity related awareness activities for students.

February 18 to April 25. Montréal's Nature Museums are pleased to announce the 13th edition of Butterflies Go Free presented by the Insectarium in the Main Exhibition Greenhouse at the Botanical Garden from February 18 to April 25. During this International Year of Biodiversity, Charles-Mathieu Brunelle, director of Montréal's nature museums, invites the public to "contemplate the beauty, fragility and tremendous diversity of butterflies throughout the world in order to develop a relationship with nature and learn more about it, understand it and protect it." www.museumsnature.ca

18 February The Nice Carnival is the highlight of the Riviera in winter and is considered one of the largest carnival in the world, it takes place this year from February 12 to 28. In 2010, global biodiversity, awareness has highlighted the theme of environment and sustainable development. <http://www.bioaddict.fr/article/ecologie-le-carnaval-de-nice-celebre-la-planete-bleue-a646p1.html>

18 February The Hydro Quebec Institute of Energy Society and Development hosted a special event in honour of the IYB under the theme “Biodiversity and Food Security” A round table discussion took place at the Université de Laval which included a presentation by the Secretariat. Opened to the students and the general public the overall aim of the event was to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity for food security. <http://impactcampus.qc.ca/article.jsp?issue=2010-02-23&article=Table-ronde-sur-la-biodiversite-agricole>

18 February Environment and Natural Resources Minister Patali Champika Ranawaka of Sri Lanka opened a Bird Sanctuary in Beddagana with the inauguration of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity (IYB), in order to preserve existing organisms in the western province, especially in Colombo. With the launch of the 2010 IYB the ministry’s Environmental Secretariat released a book on the action plan for conservation of biodiversity, posters, calendars and stickers. Agriculture Minister Udaya Gammanpila also graced the event. The IYB was launched with the co-ordination of Conservation of Forest and Wildlife Authority and Central Environmental Authority. <http://www.dailymirror.lk/print/index.php/news/front-page-news/4126.html>

18 February Biosphere Expeditions, an award winning non-profit volunteer wildlife conservation organization, recently announced its partnership of the United Nations (UN) in its ‘2010 International Year of Biodiversity’ program. These volunteer expeditions provide a fun, life-changing adventure and real hands-on experiences of working on wildlife conservation volunteering projects. Travellers can participate in anything from a weekend project to expeditions lasting several months, and at least two-thirds of the volunteer contribution will go directly into the conservation project funding it in a long-term and sustainable manner. Biosphere Expeditions proves that any volunteer traveller can have a positive impact on local communities, wildlife, and the environment. The UN has declared 2010 an international celebration of life on earth and of the value of biodiversity. It has invited the world to take action this year to safeguard the variety of life on earth, something that Biosphere Expeditions has been doing for the last 10 years. [Biosphere Expeditions](http://www.biosphere-expeditions.org/) offers volunteer travellers around the world the opportunity to personally play a part in protecting the worlds’ biodiversity through their unique wildlife conservation programs. <http://www.biosphere-expeditions.org/>

February 20, 2010. Murcia, Spain. The Majal Blanco Forest Park Program of the Region of Murcia, will base its 2010 activities in the International Year of Biodiversity of the United Nations, starting with a theoretical and practical workshop about conservation of Biodiversity, the different international strategies and the state of the issue of the region. It will also develop two monographic botany and geodiversity workshops, as well carry out activities directed to families and friends of the Majal Blanco Forest Park, which will include environmental workshops and nature games.

<http://www.abc.es/agencias/noticia.asp?noticia=261056&titulo=Programa+Majal+Blanco+basa+actividad+es+2010+en+el+A%F1o+Biodiversidad+de+la+ONU>.

21 February Israel's cabinet approved an NIS 400 million (more than \$100 million) national program for the rehabilitation and strengthening of some 150 heritage sites throughout the country. The six-year plan will aim to preserve, rehabilitate, renovate and develop historic and national sites in conjunction with relevant stakeholders and to incorporate the subject in the educational system. At the request of Environmental Protection Minister Gilad Erdan, an additional paragraph was added to the work plan which calls for the conservation of the biodiversity of plants and animals mentioned in Biblical and Jewish sources as an inseparable part of the national heritage.

22 February The United Nations Environment Programme launched its new web page highlighting the International Year of Biodiversity. <http://www.unep.org/iyb/>

22 February Natural England is highlighting England's native plants and animals for which actions taken during 2010 could make the difference between survival and extinction. During the International Year of Biodiversity, Natural England is encouraging everyone to visit one of the 15 National Nature Reserves (NNRs) across the North East to learn more about the richness of the natural world. NNRs were established to protect sensitive features and to provide "outdoor laboratories" for research. As well as managing some of our most pristine habitats, our rarest species and our most significant geology, most NNRs now offer great opportunities to experience England's natural heritage. www.naturalengland.org.uk/

22 February Orientation week at Central Queensland University in Mackay welcomed its students by celebrating under the theme 'Be Green, Be Diverse' in line with 2010 the international year of biodiversity. <http://www.dailymercury.com.au/story/2010/02/22/easing-into-it-with-o-week/>

22-23 February The United Nations International Year of Biodiversity 2010 (IYB) provides GBIF with an unprecedented opportunity to raise stakeholder awareness of our organization, its vision and mandate and the important contribution GBIF and its network of participants can make in biodiversity management, conservation and sustainable development. The GBIF-network is a powerful example of what can be achieved if countries agree to, and collaborate use, common standards and data exchange platforms. During the 11th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, the GBIF Secretariat will be raising awareness of these issues - and of their network - through active engagement at a number of key international meetings. www.gbif.org

February 23, 2010. Lima, Peru. The Peruvian Minister of Environment, Mr. Antonio Brack Egg, led the launching of a special campaign for biodiversity as celebration for the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity as declared by the United Nations. The ceremony, which was attended by political authorities, researchers, international cooperation representatives and key business men, was followed by an exhibition of some products of Peruvian biodiversity, such as organic coffee, maca, among others. http://www.agenciaorbita.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3372:ministerio-del-ambiente-lanza-celebraciones-por-ano-internacional-de-la-biodiversidad-&catid=52:politica&Itemid=77

23 February A video designed to make the hotel industry more aware of the importance of biodiversity has been launched by IUCN, in partnership with Accor, the European leader in hotels. Biodiversity: My hotel in action can be seen at: www.iucn.org/iyb/?4774/My-hotel-in-action

23 February A host of giant brightly-lit creatures including dragons, ducks and dinosaurs illuminated the Cotswold Water Park. The Willow Lantern Pageant proved a breathtaking sight as youth groups and classes from schools across the Cotswolds showcased their glowing creations through the park. The project was led by arts consultant Lesley Greene and community artist John Charles Kimberley as a celebration of the wildlife of the area for the International Year of Biodiversity. http://www.wiltsglosstandard.co.uk/news/5023203.Willow_creatures_light_up_Cotswold_Water_Park/

23 February In this International Year of Biodiversity, MME (BirdLife in Hungary) has decided to celebrate the three common species of swallow and martins: Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Northern House-martin *Delichon urbicum* and Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*. MME organises several initiatives to celebrate their Bird of the Year, including swallow-watching tours, ringing demonstrations and lessons on how to build them nests. For more information Zsombor Berenyi at berenyi.zsombor@mme.hu

23 February The IYB celebrations in Morocco were officially launched during the 5th “Days of Water Birds and Wetlands”, with the theme ‘What future do we face in the context of climate change?’, 23-25 February 2010 at the Rabat Science Institute, in collaboration with the Secretary of State for Water and the Environment, the High Commission for Water and Forests and the Fight against Desertification, the Mohammed V-Agdal Science Institute, the Research Group for the Protection of Birds in Morocco, Bird Life International and the National Network of Marine Science & Technology. During the Year, the Secretary of State for Water and the Environment, with national and international partners, will organise activities to raise the general public’s awareness on the importance of biodiversity in Morocco, encouraging actions to protect this invaluable natural wealth and use it sustainably.

24 February BirdLife International and LPO (BirdLife in France), in cooperation with local conservation organizations, published [*Un patrimoine, un atout – Oiseaux des départements d’outre-mer*](#), presenting the status of birds and biodiversity in the French overseas departments, and focusing on their added values and the threats they are facing. "More than ever it is now urgent to mobilize all the available legal, technical and financial tools at our disposal to halt the biodiversity decline both in Europe and in France", commented Angelo Caserta, Regional Director of BirdLife International European Division. www.birdlife.org/news/news/2010/02/lpo_patrimoine.html

24 February The Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI) for Polar and Marine Research introduces Marine species in the light of the United Nations General Assembly’s declaration of 2010 as International Year of Biodiversity. The Institute looked at an ecosystem previously shielded by an ice shelf at the East coast of the Antarctic Peninsula and reported about *Molgula pedunculata* and starfish. www.explorersweb.com/science/news.php?id=19132

24 February The city of Paris launched its biodiversity conservation plan for the city. Mayor Bertrand Delanoë announced that the conservation plan for the city was launched to coincide with the UN declared International Year and will help to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation. <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h9tKOqIqE162aWT8hF7xc6qTxG8Q>

24-26 February: The IYB was celebrated during the 11th Special Session of the Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in Bali, Indonesia (www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xi/). Among topics discussed during the Reporting Green workshop was "Pricing Nature: The Economic and Social Value of Ecosystems and Biodiversity", "The International Year of Biodiversity", and "The Way Forward, Global Markets: The Green Economy Option"

February 25, 2010. Chapultepec, Mexico. The Chief of Government of the Federal District of Mexico, Marcelo Ebrard, inaugurated a genomic laboratory in Chapultepec as part of the celebrations for the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity of the United Nations. The laboratory seeks to allow research and knowledge accumulation of fauna for the betterment of conservation efforts and the protection of species. According to the Secretary of Environment of the Federal District, Martha Delgado, this laboratory is the first of its kind and represents an important achievement for local administration. http://www.cronica.com.mx/nota.php?id_notas=490452

25-26 February Foundations of Biodiversity: saving the world’s non-vertebrates This symposium brought together researchers and conservation practitioners from a wide range of backgrounds in invertebrate and plant conservation to highlight and debate the importance of non-vertebrate biodiversity from ecological, social and economic perspectives held at the ZSL London Zoo. www.zsl.org

26-27 February 2010, Athens: "Copenhagen 2009: The environment in the global crisis." Conference organized by the Panteion University on the occasion of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The conference was organized with the support of UNRIC.

February 27 Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science (IR3S) Symposium to Commemorate the International Year of Biodiversity was held in Tokyo, Japan.

February 27 to March 7, 2010 the Biosphère in Montreal will focus on raising the environmental awareness of young people. To become a Guardian of the Earth, young people will be asked to tour the Biosphere's guided activities armed with special booklets that will be stamped for each activity they complete. By participating in some of the awareness-raising activities, they will earn the coveted certification of Guardian of the Earth, signifying their commitment to do what they can, everyday, to protect the environment. A film on biodiversity, entitled *Man and His World*, will be accompanied by a timely discussion in this International Year of Biodiversity. www.biosphere.ec.gc.ca

27 February The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Protected Area and Wildlife Bureau (DENR-PAWB) has launched the Philippine Biodiversity Conservation logo. The logo contest is part of the National celebration for the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) which was declared by the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD).

<http://www.pia.gov.ph/default.asp?m=12&r=&y=&mo=&fi=p100227.htm&no=15>

27 February Over 500 trees were planted at the park in collaboration with the ecological tourism Dounya Algiers as part of the global campaign for a billion trees "Plant for the Planet and the International Year of Biodiversity. Initiated by the Ministry of Planning, Environment and Tourism in collaboration with the Embassy of China Friendship Association and the Algerian-Chinese operation has seen the planting of 525 trees of different species. In a press statement, the Chinese Ambassador Liu Yuhe, welcomed this event by stressing the importance of planting trees and its contribution to environmental protection and the overall importance of living in harmony with nature. "

<http://www.letempsdz.com/content/view/33102/1/>

28 February Significant interest from citizen groups and municipalities to grow the Greenbelt a true mark of success as the Greenbelt celebrates its Fifth Anniversary. As the Greater Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt celebrates its Fifth Anniversary, its success is demonstrated by the number of municipalities and citizen groups looking to expand the Greenbelt into their communities, says a report released today by the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance. "The Greenbelt provides critically important habitat protection for the nearly 100 endangered and threatened species that call it home," said Caroline Schultz, Executive Director of Ontario Nature. "2010 is the International year of Biodiversity. We can celebrate that the Greenbelt has established precedent-setting protection that is key to preventing further declines in Ontario's biodiversity and to safeguarding many of its rare plants and animals."

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/February2010/28/c5381.html>

28 February To mark the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) has organized a landmark photography exhibition entitled "Abu Dhabi Wildlife Photography Exhibition" on display from March 3-7, 2010. The exhibition, which will coincide with the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair 2010, aims to increase the public's awareness on the UAE's unique biodiversity. More than one hundred photographs by professional photographers will be on display in the travelling exhibition which will be held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC). The images will remain on display until March 7, before continuing on their way around the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1267000610625&pagename=WAM%2FWAM_E_Layout&parent=Query&parentid=1135099399852

28 February Ministère de l'écologie, de l'énergie, du développement durable et de la mer in France launched its IYB site with a biodiversity quiz aimed at raising public awareness on the importance of biodiversity.

<http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/spip.php?page=actualite>

As you are aware, the Secretariat has established the IYB museum comprising of outreach materials by Parties and partners to mark this event. The Museum will be displayed at the closing ceremony of the International Year to be held in Ishikawa, Kanazawa in December 2010 as well as at the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly when it will consider the final report of the International Year.

The Secretariat kindly reminds all Parties and partners that have not yet submitted their celebration plan to do so at their earliest convenience and no later than 31 March 2010 and to send us your outreach materials for inclusion in the IYB museum.