

Minister Gabriel welcomes pledge of billions for international nature conservation

Federal Environment Minister Gabriel has welcomed the announcement by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel that Germany will increase its funds for international nature conservation by billions over the coming years. He also praised Finance Minister Peer Steinbrück. "This pledge by Chancellor Merkel is hugely important for the conservation of tropical forests and biological diversity, it sets a benchmark internationally. However, this decision would not have been possible without solid budget policy and the commitment of Peer Steinbrück."

Earlier at the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, Federal Chancellor Merkel announced that Germany will provide an additional half a billion euro up to 2012 in order to halt deforestation. From 2013, there will then be half a billion euro per year. Chancellor Merkel called for a new direction in biodiversity conservation policy and appealed to all Parties to step up their efforts.

Currently, 170 million euro per year are earmarked for international forest conservation in the budget of the Federal Development Ministry. From this year, the Federal Environment Ministry will increase this amount, by 40 million euro from emissions trading, to 210 million. By 2012 the amount will thus total 840 million. According to the Chancellor's announcement, this sum will be topped up by a total of 500 million euro by 2012, to 1.34 billion. From 2013, the current funds of 210 million euro per year will more than double to 500 million euro per year.

At the opening of the High-Level Segment of the conference, Minister Gabriel spoke of a breakthrough in the fight against so-called biopiracy. The issue at stake is to ensure that developing countries get a share in the benefits resulting from the use of their plants and genetic resources by pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies. During their informal working sessions, the delegates were able to agree on a concrete mandate which lays down a fixed and ambitious timetable and a text as a basis for negotiations on an international ABS regime (ABS: Access and Benefit Sharing) over the next two years. A formal adoption of the decision is expected on Friday. Thus, after 16 years the international community has finally succeeded in finding a common path which will lead us to an internationally binding agreement on the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of biological diversity.

Further Information:

- [Welcome address by Minister Gabriel](#) - [Pictures of the event](#) - www.bmu.de/un-conference2008