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OPENING SPEECH

By

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at

ABS EU Expert Meeting

***Advancing together on Nagoya Protocol implementation
and preparing the COP/MOP1 (13-17 Pyeongchang)***

Rome, 4-5 September 2014

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, “*International Conferences*” Room

Good morning to everybody and welcome in Rome.

Before starting the meeting, I will spend just a few words to introduce the two-day program that is expected to be useful for all of us with respect to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol at national and global level.

I had the opportunity to know many of you during past international meetings but it is the case to introduce myself for the records. I'm Anna Maria Maggiore, I'm the officer of the Ministry of the Environment in charge for the Nagoya Protocol and - for the term of the Italian Presidency - I've been also asked to follow the ABS issues and the preparation of CoP/MoP 1 in the Working Group for International Environmental Issues at the Council of the European Union.

Let me talk about the today expert meeting. Only two months ago, we didn't know if the Protocol would enter into force in time to have its first MoP concurrently with the CoP 12 of the CBD. As well, the EU Regulation n.511/2014 on the first implementation of the Nagoya Protocol at European level related its application to the entry in force of the Protocol.

After last 14 of July and the deposit of the last necessary ratification, we do know, now, that the Protocol will enter into force and, consequently, that the first MoP will be effectively held and that the EU Regulation will be applicable.

In different moments, this year, we tried to organize an expert meeting to share together our vision on these topics. Unfortunately, the fast pace of the news related to the Protocol, as well as the several meetings held in the past months, never allowed to finalize a date for it.

Here we are now, at the very begin of a process that is both European and global, and that will catch our attention for the years ahead with several challenges to face.

I take the chance to address by my own my thanks to the Member States and European Commission, descended 'en masse' on Rome, to quote Astrid Schomaker from the Commission,

we are going to meet tomorrow, as well as the International organizations and of course the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their hospitality and their help.

I really thank you all for having ensured such a strong participation.

The day 1 of the Expert Meeting will be dedicated to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol within the European Union.

The first part of day will host an introductory session, with the contributions of the EU Commission and a presentation of the experiences from major International Organizations and EU stakeholders closely involved in the ABS regime. The aim is exploring the link between Nagoya Protocol and other existing international approaches and tools, in view of NP's national implementations.

There will be room for open discussion for any participant.

The second part of the day, restricted to the Government, will be entirely dedicated to an ABS MSs experts roundtable discussing the NP ratification and implementation processes carried out by EU MS at national level. It could be interesting to share different experiences from MSs that have already ratified the Protocol, those along the way towards ratification and MSs currently approaching the process.

The day 2 will focus on COP/MOP1 agenda preparation. It is scheduled a working day dedicated to COP/MOP1 open issues in view of the EU position finalization. Particular attention will be given to the compliance issue under art. 30 of the NP, as well as the role of ILCs within it. An exchange of technical views on the ABS Clearing House mechanism (art. 14 NP), its feasibility and weakness points, will be also included in the working agenda for discussion as well as monitoring and reporting (art. 29 NP).

Other items (GMBSM art. 10 NP, model contractual clauses and best practices under art. 19 and 20 NP, capacity building under art. 22) requiring further EU coordination according to what requested in the related recommendations might be considered as well.

The EU position papers related to the above-mentioned items will be debated during this session of work in view of its final discussion at the biodiversity WPIEI scheduled for next 10 September. The Commission and the MS experts will work together exploring the elements that need to be addressed as European Union position.

Finally, the two days meeting will be the opportunity to make further steps in the preparation of the COP/MOP1, taking stock of ICNP3 conclusions and recommendations, and would allow us to prepare sound positions and favor EU coordination and the common negotiation in Pyeongchang.

We are going to deal with several topics, taking into account the many aspects of the Protocol to be implemented both at national and global scale. Mostly we are dealing with a new regime, the ABS, whose tools as well as its solutions have to be fully set, and requiring a not ordinary efforts by the operators both public and private, amid Member States and EU, and the within the whole International Community.

I do believe the results of the 2 days works will provide a valuable contribution to investigate approaches and opinions on the ABS regime and to offer a strong contribute in Pyeongchang.

Having in mind this, I open the works and I wish you a collaborative and fruitful work.