

**INTERNSHIP WITH THE SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY:  
SUPPORTING THE BIODIVERSITY AND HEALTH INITIATIVE**

**PERIOD AND DUTY STATION**

3 months to 6 months, commencing in March 2012, in Montreal, Canada.

Note: commencement date is *negotiable*. Please state preferred starting date/month and internship duration in application.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this internship is to provide assistance to implement the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, specifically with regards to health and biodiversity-related Convention decisions and activities.

The internship offers an opportunity for a graduate student or advanced undergraduate student to gain international work experience and become acquainted with the implementation of a major United Nations multilateral environmental agreement and the intergovernmental processes this entails. In addition, the intern will gain an understanding of biodiversity and health linkages, the range of health issues related to biodiversity policies and help to explore opportunities for mainstreaming biodiversity within the health sector in an international context.

**BACKGROUND**

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is one of the key agreements adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where world leaders agreed on a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development – meeting our needs while ensuring that we leave a healthy and viable world for future generations. The Convention establishes three main goals: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources.

At the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the CBD, held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, the CBD Parties adopted a new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020 to guide international and national efforts. The Strategic Plan vision is of a world “Living in harmony with nature” where “by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”

In addition, the CBD Parties adopted 17 decisions at COP 10 that make reference to human health and well-being. The Parties to the CBD are making an increasing number of health-related requests to the Secretariat through the COP and the Conventions other bodies, such as the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice Meeting (SBSTTA) decisions.

In response to these, the CBD Secretariat is further promoting the benefits to human health and wellbeing from biodiversity in line with the following objectives:

1. **Contribute knowledge and lesson-sharing** on biodiversity and health for implementation of the Strategic Plan.
2. **Promote biodiversity and health co-benefits** that contribute to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and support the MDGs.
3. **Continue to strengthen collaboration** to enhance the adoption of biodiversity and health policies by the CBD Parties and partners.

4. **Provide capacity-building activities** in developing countries for integration of human health into national biodiversity-related activities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the overall guidance of the Executive Secretary and the direct supervision of the Programme Officer for Health and Biodiversity, the intern will contribute to the substantive work of the Secretariat in advancing a limited number of activities to raise awareness on the role of biodiversity as a foundation for a suite of ecosystem services on which human health depends, consistent with the 4 objectives above.

In particular, the tasks of the intern may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Research and develop materials for a variety of audiences that demonstrate the environmental, social and economic values of biodiversity for health, including fact sheets, brochures, presentations and case studies.
- Assist with the planning, organization and review of biodiversity and health-related events and activities at the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 16) in May 2012, Montreal, Canada and also with events and activities being planned for COP 11 in October 2012, Hyderabad, India.
- Assist with the effective administration duties and tasks of Secretariat, as part of the team.
- Write, review and translate documents, as required, based on relevant skills.

The work will *inter alia* involve desk study, review of existing research and knowledge sources, internet research, liaising with relevant institutions and SCBD staff, and the drafting of documents. Responsibilities may be further specified in accordance with the needs of the Secretariat as well as the personal interests and qualifications of the candidate.

## COMPETENCIES

Candidates from all disciplines are welcome to apply for this post. However, a strong interest in biodiversity issues and the health sector is essential and prior experience in communications would be highly regarded. In addition, prior exposure to multilateral diplomacy and sustainable development would be an asset.

Additional required qualifications-

- Very strong writing skills in English
- Excellent computer skills
- Ability to familiarize him/herself with complex tasks in a brief period of time and to work under minimal supervision and meet tight deadlines
- Enjoy working in a dynamic and multicultural environment
- International mindset and a desire to change the world

Desirable qualifications-

- Oral and written fluency in French, Spanish and/or other languages

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Application forms and eligibility criteria are accessible at:  
<http://www.cbd.int/secretariat/vacancies.shtml>
- Internships with the UN are not remunerated and all the expenses connected with it must be borne by the intern or by the sponsoring institution or government;
- There is no expectancy of employment at the end of the internship; and the UN accepts no responsibility for accidents and/or illness incurred during the intern's stay;
- The UN does not deal with immigration authorities in Canada and, therefore, the intern is responsible for obtaining any necessary visas on his/her own.



Please send applications to [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) by 2 March 2012