

## **OAS hosts dialogue on priorities of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**

The Department of Sustainable Development of the Organization of American States (OAS-DSD), jointly with the CITES Secretariat, held a dialogue today, in support of activities for the conservation and sustainable use of the 34,000 species of wild animals and plants protected by the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

In the opening remarks, the Executive Secretary for Integral Development, Amb. Mauricio Cortes Costa, highlighted that “The need to support countries achieve a comprehensive protection of species of flora and fauna and improve and promote legal, financial and institutional mechanisms is worthy not only of dialogue but of concrete actions”. He further emphasized the importance of the discussions in the context of the International year of biodiversity and the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. Also, CITES Secretary General Mr. John Scanlon reminded the participants that it was important to identify resources and opportunities for cooperation to provide legislative assistance to member States to streamline wildlife trade that is sustainable and traceable; and in the formulation of policy tools and guidelines that protect the livelihoods of the rural poor depending on wildlife resources, among other challenges facing biodiversity in the Americas.

The meeting gathered representatives of OAS member states, international organizations, development agencies and think tanks working on the conservation of Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. During the meeting synergies and opportunities for cooperation were identified on efforts conducted in OAS member States and the CITES work program and to strengthen the capacity of countries to effectively enforce the Convention.