



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

HEALTH - Tens of thousands of Afghans - predominantly women and children - have contracted the disfiguring skin disease cutaneous leishmaniasis and the number of cases is increasing, the United Nations World Health Organization says. The disease, transmitted by the bite of sand flies, threatens the health of 13 million Afghans.

BIODIVERSITY - An international agreement on methods to protect plant and animal species and a treaty on access to natural resources will be the main focus of a two-week meeting beginning in Japan on Monday. UN officials warn governments have failed to meet 2010 targets to halt biodiversity loss and new agreements must provide stronger protections.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Rural Africa needs to wake up to climate change, which is threatening food security, people's resilience to cope with natural disasters, and economic growth, participants told at the Seventh African Development Forum in Addis Ababa.

DR CONGO - Around 1,700 women took to the streets of the eastern town of Bukavu, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to protest against sexual violence on Sunday. The head of the United Nations mission in the DRC said that an estimated 15,000 people were raped in the region in 2009.

SUDAN - A failed harvest and the effects of prolonged flooding may be fuelling an outbreak of Visceral leishmaniasis, also known as Kala-azar, in parts of Southern Sudan, say health officials.

Sub-Saharan Region - An academic dispute about whether concurrent sexual partnerships are really a major factor behind high rates of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa could affect the future of prevention programmes.

ZAMBIA - Buoyed by government's fertiliser subsidy, Zambia's farmers produced 2.8 million tonnes of maize in the 2009/10 growing season. Initial delight over the increased harvest - up from 1.8 million tonnes the previous year - gave way to worry as farmers realised they could be stuck with most of the crop.

■ASIA

Asia Region - In a region where carrying a condom has been construed as evidence of illicit activity, 10 million women sell sex to 75 million men, who then have sex with another 50 million people, according to the multinational Independent Commission on AIDS in Asia.

VIETNAM - As central Vietnam continued to be battered by flooding that has killed at least 66 and affected half a million people since 2 October.

WFWO's Communications Team