

Brief record of the 37th Meeting of GEAC held on 13.6.2003.

The 37th meeting of the GEAC was held on 13.6.2003 at 2.30 PM in the MoEF under the Chairmanship of Shri V.K Duggal, Special Secretary, MoEF. List of participants is annexed.

1.0 Opening Remarks of the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Sushu Kumar, Co- Chairman and all the members of the GEAC. He also welcomed Dr. S. Nagaragan, Director IARI and Chairman MEC and Dr. C.D. Mayee, Director Central Institute of Cotton Research, Nagpur who participated in this meeting as a special invitee.

At the outset, the Chairman briefly dwelt upon some of the crucial issues before the GEAC before taken up the Agenda for discussion. Referring to issues discussed in the Inter-ministerial Meeting on 26th march 2003 and 36th GEAC meeting held on 25th April 2003, the Chairman informed the committee that comments from only some of the Ministries and Members have been received. He requested all the members to forward their comments within two weeks so that the task force for addressing various issues on GM Food/Crop Policy can be set up on a priority basis.

The Committee was also informed about the recent meeting of the Committee constituted by the Ministry to institute a proper monitoring and verification mechanism to assess the performance of Bt Cotton during Kharif 2003. Emphasizing the need to finalize the report of the Committee on a priority basis he requested Mr. Ashish Bahuguna, JS, Ministry of Agriculture to take a lead and set up the necessary linkage with the State Department of Agriculture of establishing the monitoring network.

On the issue of illegal production of transgenic Bt cotton seeds in Gujarat, the Chairman informed the Committee on the action taken by the Ministry. He also expressed the view that the State Govt. should set up the State and District level Biosafety Committees on a priority basis as mandated in the 1989 Rules especially in all the Bt. Cotton growing areas and assured support form the MoEF in providing training programs to sensitize the State and District level Biosafety Committees on their role and responsibilities.

Drawing the attention of the Committee to the recent BBC interview with Secretary, DBT and other news paper article regarding release of transgenic potato in India, the Chairman informed the Committee that no request for trials/commercial release of transgenic potato has been made to the GEAC. He requested the DBT representative to clarify the same during the course of discussion.

The Co- Chairman, GEAC agreed with the points made by the Chairman and on behalf of the Committee agreed to forward the comments on the GM Food/ Crop policy within two weeks.

2.0 Confirmation of the minutes of the 36th meeting of the GEAC held on 06.03.2003

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the 36th meeting of GEAC held on 25th April, 2003, which was circulated to all members. The minutes were confirmed with the following modification: