

BIO SAFETY



A Quarterly
Newsletter

Newsletter

From the Desk of Editor



I am pleased to inform that the activities related to the ongoing UNEP-GEF supported phase-II capacity building project on biosafety were presented during the 16th National Project Coordinators (NPCs) meeting held in Bhutan and the progress of the project was greatly appreciated. This meeting was attended by several countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos etc.

A project brief that provides an overview of all the project related activities has been prepared for wider circulation and dissemination among stakeholders. As per the UNEP-GEF project monitoring and supervisory requirements, the second meeting of the National Steering Committee (NSC) was held on June 26, 2014. Activities related to Socio-economic Considerations and Public Awareness have been initiated and I request all the readers to follow the progress of the project and share their inputs for strengthening the prioritized thrust areas.

I also like to remind all the readers regarding the upcoming COP-MOP-7 meeting which would be held in Korea from September 29 to October 3, 2014. I request all the readers to follow the proceedings and documents which would be made available for public use by the Secretariat of Convention in Biodiversity (CBD).

Hem Pande

Additional Secretary

Ministry of Environment, Forests
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COP MOP 7 and COP 12



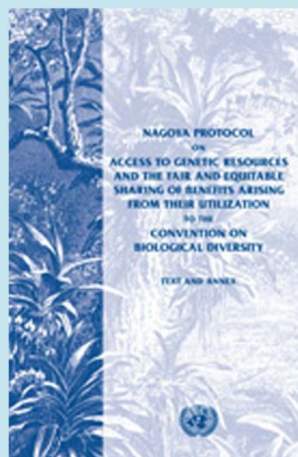
The seventh meeting of the Conference of the parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP-7) will be held in Pyeongchang, Gangwon Province, Republic of Korea, from 29 September to 3 October 2014. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-12), which will be held at the same venue from 6 to 17 October 2014.

Similarly COP-MOP-7 will deliberate on implementation of the "Strategic Plan for CPB for the period 2011-2020". In this context a special session has been included to allow Parties to share experience and exchange views on better ways of integrating biosafety into relevant national development plans, other relevant national policies and programmes, including the national biodiversity strategies and national plans (NBSAPs).

The theme of COP-12 is "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development". The COP12 will undertake a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets and prepare Pyeongchang Roadmap to facilitate their implementation.

The Secretariat of the CBD has notified the provisional agenda for both the meetings at <http://www.cbd.int>

The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing



The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing is a new international treaty adopted under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan on 29 October 2010. Its objective is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and implementing the three objectives of the CBD.

As per the requirements, the Nagoya Protocol will enter into force 90 days after ratification by 50 countries. With Uruguay's ratification on July 14, 2014, it became the 50th Party. Nagoya Protocol will now enter into force on 12 October, 2014 i.e. 90 days after ratification by 50 countries. As on date 92 Parties have signed the protocol and 51 Parties have ratified this Protocol. India signed

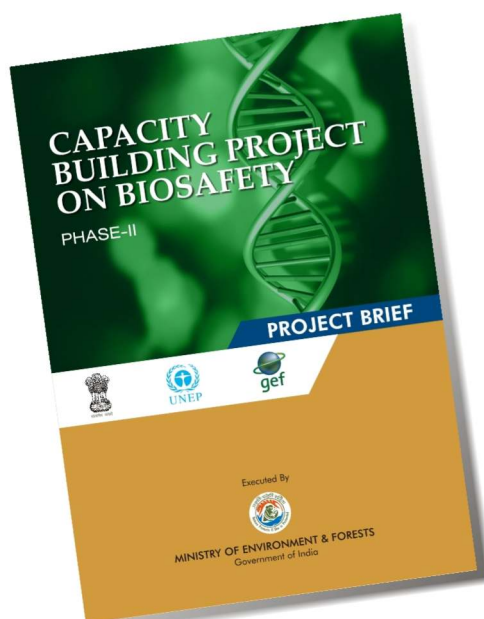
this Protocol on May 11, 2011 and ratified on October 09, 2012.

The Nagoya Protocol will create greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources by:

- Establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources.
- Helping to ensure benefit-sharing when genetic resources leave the contracting party providing the genetic resource

The first meeting of the Conference of the parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP 1) to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization will be held concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 12) in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, from 13 to 17 October 2014.

More information can be read at <http://www.cbd.int/abs>



Project Brief: Phase II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety

A 'Project Brief' on the ongoing Phase II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety has been prepared to give a snapshot of the project for wider dissemination among various stakeholders. The brief provides information on the context, highlights, project design and expected project outcomes. The activities proposed to be undertaken have been presented under the four thrust areas viz. Risk Assessment and Risk Management, Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification, Socio-economic Considerations and Public Awareness related to living modified organism in agriculture.



16th National Project Coordinators Meeting at Thimpu, Bhutan

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through its Biosafety division supports Parties through projects in relevant areas to strengthen their capacities for meeting the obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) and other International Conventions. In this regard, an annual meeting of the National Project Coordinators (NPCs) is organised among the participating countries for sharing their experiences in implementation of these projects and also for enhancing regional cooperation and harmonization along with training in the project management tools and skills.

The 16th meeting of the NPCs was held in Thimphu, Bhutan from June 9-13, 2014. In this meeting discussion were held about the emerging trends under the CPB and for providing hands on training in the usage of ANUBIS (A new UNEP Biosafety Information System) for meeting the project management reporting requirements.

The main objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Create a platform for experience sharing especially on monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, review of documentation and lessons learnt to guide future interventions.

2. Discuss ongoing developments under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and experiences in implementation of the Protocol.
3. Discuss the challenges faced and experiences in execution of the projects.
4. Training on using ANUBIS as a project management tool.

In addition the focus of this meeting was on "Capacity Building Measures / Tools on Monitoring & Enforcement and Public Engagement in Decision Making". In that respect, countries were encouraged to bring relevant information along with materials developed either as brochures, publications, manuals, banners, DVDs and other electronic materials for sharing among the participating countries.

Hands on training was provided to participants in the Project Management Reporting requirements through ANUBIS especially on preparation of Work Plans, Rephasal of budgets, preparation of Periodic Progress Reports (PPRs), Quarterly Expenditure Reports (QERs) etc. Apart from this, Members also discussed issues and topics related to upcoming COP-MOP 7 to be held in Korea from September 29 to October 3, 2014.

Mrs. Madhu Gupta, Research Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change along with Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata, Manager in Project Coordination Unit (PCU) set up at Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL), New Delhi attended the 16th NPCs meeting to share and discuss about the ongoing and proposed activities to be initiated in Phase II biosafety project in India.

Fair on National Experiences with the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

A fair on national experiences with the implementation of the CPB as part of the Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) shall be organized on the side-lines of COP-MOP7 to be held from September 29 to October 03, 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. The fair is being jointly organized by the Government of the Republic of Korea, as the host of COP-MOP7, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat. It will provide Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations with the opportunity to showcase their national experiences, good practices and lessons learned on various themes. The participating governments and organizations will be able to present their activities and outputs in a variety of formats, including posters, printed material, CD-ROMs, video and/or PowerPoint presentations.

Testing of the Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs



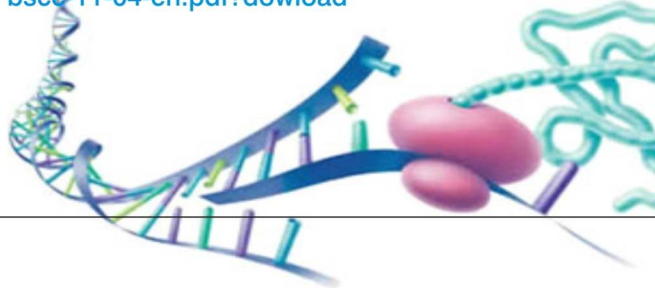
In line with the decision of COP - MOP 6 regarding testing of the guidance on risk assessment of LMOs, a concept note and a questionnaire were developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with Adhoc Technical Expert Group(AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and taking into account discussions in the Open-Ended Online Forum. Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations, risk assessors and other experts who are actively involved in risk assessment were encouraged to undertake the survey. 54 submissions were made in total, reporting the results of the testing of the Guidance. Among those, 41 were from Parties, 3 from other Governments and 10 from organizations. Among the submissions from Parties, 26 were from developing countries. The survey results can be accessed at http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/testing_guidance_RA.shtml

Integration of biosafety into the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

In line with the “Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020”, a special session is being organized to deliberate on the implementation of the Protocol. One of the key issues to be discussed in this session is on integration of biosafety into the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and other national development plans. The suggestion to organize this session has emerged from the tenth meeting of the Liaison Group on Capacity Building for Biosafety held on April 7-9, 2014 in Budapest. An online forum on implementation of CPB was convened for two weeks from May 26 to June 7, 2014 to facilitate preliminary exchange of information, views and experiences of the Parties in this regard. The details of the discussions can be accessed at http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art22/cbforum2014.shtml

Report of the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on the work of its Eleventh Meeting

In continuation to efforts towards strengthening the status of compliance to the obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the eleventh meeting of the Compliance Committee was held from May 28-30, 2014 in Montreal. One of the key issues considered by the committee related to the review of consistency between information in national reports and the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH). A detailed analysis has been done in this regard by the Secretariat, which was discussed. It was noted that the discrepancies identified in the review could be due to ambiguity of some questions or limitations in capacities of BCH focal points in understanding the information requirements. The Secretariat was advised to continue its efforts to address such inconsistencies. Among its various recommendations, the compliance committee suggested to undertake capacity building initiative to assist developing country Parties in the use of BCH. The full text of the report may be accessed at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/bs/bscc-11/official/bscc-11-04-en.pdf?download>





Transportability of confined field trial data for Environmental Risk Assessment of Genetically Engineered Plants: A Conceptual Framework



It is commonly held that confined field trials (CFTs) used to evaluate the potential adverse environmental impacts of a genetically engineered (GE) plant should be conducted in each country where cultivation is intended, even when relevant and potentially sufficient data are already available from studies conducted elsewhere. The acceptance of data generated in CFTs "out of country" can only be realized in practice if the agro-climatic zone where a CFT is conducted is demonstrably representative of the agro-climatic zones in those geographies to which the data will be transported.

In an attempt to elaborate this idea, a multi-disciplinary Working Group of scientists collaborated to develop a conceptual framework and associated process to support transportability of CFT data for environmental risk assessment (ERA). It has been concluded that an application of the conceptual

framework provides a scientifically defensible process for evaluating if existing CFT data from remote sites are relevant and/or sufficient for local ERAs. Additionally, it promotes a strategic approach to identifying CFT site locations so that field data will be transportable from one regulatory jurisdiction to another. Application of the framework and process should be particularly beneficial to public sector product developers and small enterprises that develop innovative GE events but cannot afford to replicate redundant CFTs, and to regulatory authorities seeking to improve the deployment of limited institutional resources.

The detailed article by Garcia-Alonso *et al* has been published online in "Transgenic Research" on April 15, 2014 and can be accessed at <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11248-014-9785-0>



Economic Impact of GM Crops The global income and production effects 1996-2012

In continuation to annual studies by PG Economic Limited, UK, which examined economic impacts on yields, key costs of production, direct farm income and effects, and impacts on the production base of the four main crops of soybeans, corn, cotton and canola, a comprehensive report has been recently published to analyze the global income and production effects of GM crops from 1996-2012. This analysis shows that there have been very significant net economic benefits at the farm level amounting \$116.6 billion for the 17-year period. These economic gains have been divided roughly 50% each to farmers in developed and developing countries. GM technology have also made important contributions to increasing global production levels of the four main crops, having added 122 million tonnes and 230 million tonnes respectively, to the global production of soybeans and maize since the introduction of the technology in the mid-1990s. This article can be accessed at: <http://www.pgeconomics.co.uk/publications.php>

Upcoming Events

Title	Organized/hosted by	Date & Venue	Website
National Events			
ICAR sponsored Summer School on New frontiers in hybrid seed production and genetic purity testing	Anand Agricultural University	August 5 to 25, 2014, Anand, Gujarat	http://aau.in/sites/default/files/SUMMER_SCHOOL_BACA_AAU_ANA_ND_may_2014.pdf
Advanced Course on "Novel Approaches in Pest and Pesticide Management in Agro-Ecosystem"	CCS Haryana Agricultural University	August 19 – September 8, 2014, Hisar, Haryana	http://www.hau.ernet.in/ento1529.pdf
National Conference of Plant Physiology (NCP-2014) On "Frontiers of Plant Physiology Research: Food Security and Environmental Challenges"	Department of Plant Physiology Orissa University of Agriculture & Technology Bhubaneswar & Indian Society for Plant Physiology, New Delhi	November 23-25, 2014, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	http://www.ouat.ac.in/download/NCP%202014.pdf
National Conference on Pulses: Challenges and Opportunities under Changing Climate Scenario	Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Jabalpur, Indian Society of Pulses Research and Development, Indian Institute of Pulses Research, Kanpur and Indian Council of Agricultural Research	September 29 – October 1, 2014	http://www.iipr.res.in/pdf/ncp_10july2014.pdf
TERI-ITEC Courses 2014-15 Course IV - Applications of biotechnology and its regulation	The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)	December 8 – 26, 2014 Gurgaon	http://www.teriin.org/index.php?option=com_events&view=details&sid=691&Itemid=110
International			
Postgraduate Certificate in "Biosafety in Plant Biotechnology"	Institute of Plant Biotechnology Outreach	Ghent University, Belgium	http://www.ugent.be/we/genetics/ipbo/en/education/postgraduate
Theoretical and Practical Course "Plant Tissue Culture: Tool for Genetic Engineering of Plants"	ICGEB and National Biotechnology Development Agency, Nigeria	August 10-23, 2014, Abuja, Nigeria	http://www.icgeb.org/meetings-2014.html
BIO JOHOR 2014, 4th Johor Biotechnology Conference and Exhibition	Johor Biotechnology and Biodiversity Corporation and Malaysian Biotechnology Corporation	August 26-27, 2014, Johor, Malaysia	http://www.biojohor.my
South Asia Biosafety Conference 2014	South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP), Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) and Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, Sri Lanka	September 15-16, 2014, Colombo, Sri Lanka	http://sabc.biotech.co.in/
12th Asian Conference and Expert Consultation on Maize for Food, Feed, Nutrition and Environmental Security	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences (VAAS)	October 27, 29, 2014, Hanoi, Vietnam	http://www.apaari.org/events/12th-conference-on-maize.html
13th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (ISBGM013)	International Society for Biosafety Research (ISBR)	November 9-13, 2014, Cape Town, South Africa	http://isbr.info/ISBGM013

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