

BIO SAFETY



जहाँ है हरियाली।
वहाँ है खुशहाली।

A Quarterly
Newsletter

Newsletter

From the Desk of Editor



I am pleased to inform the reintroduction of quarterly Biosafety Newsletter. It is my pleasure to dedicate this issue to the outcomes of the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP) to the Cartagena Protocol held on October 11-15, 2010 at Nagoya, Japan. After a long process of consultation, a treaty on Liability and Redress called "The Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol" was adopted in this meeting. Apart from this another major outcome of the meeting was adoption of "Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020".

With the increasing trade in living modified organisms (LMOs), there is an urgent need to strengthen the implementation of provisions of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in the countries. We shall try to keep you apprised of the developments in this regard through this newsletter and at the same time, I invite all the stakeholders to actively participate and share their views on relevant issues.

I am also pleased to inform that India is hosting the eleventh Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the sixth Conference of the Parties serving as Meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP 6) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to be held on 1-19 October, 2012 at Hyderabad.

I sincerely hope that this newsletter shall be good a platform to communicate and share the information on biosafety with the various stakeholders.

Hem Pande

Joint Secretary

Ministry of Environment
and Forests

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India Launches Biodiversity Decade for Asia and the Pacific



With a view of raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity (or the variety of life on earth), achieving the Aichi Targets, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 to 2020 as the UN Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB). As a step to further promote the same, the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity launched the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011-2020) for Asia and the Pacific, on 23rd May 2011.

At the launch, Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Minister for Environment and Forests also unveiled the CoP-11 logo and slogan - 'Prakruthi Rakshathi Rakshita' - which means 'Nature protects if she is protected'.



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India to host the eleventh Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the sixth Conference of the Parties serving as Meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP 6) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

1-19 October 2012, Hyderabad



CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress



A new international treaty, **"The Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety"**, was adopted on October 15, 2010 at the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP 5) to the Cartagena Protocol held at Nagoya, Japan. It took six years of negotiations before adoption of this treaty.

The issue of liability and redress for damage resulting from the transboundary movements of LMOs was one of the themes on the agenda during the negotiation of the Biosafety Protocol. The negotiators were unable to reach any consensus regarding the details of a liability regime under the Protocol. Article 27 of the Protocol set the stage for the establishment of a formal process towards completion of the consideration of the issue within a defined timeframe. Article 27 required the COP-MOP to adopt, at its first meeting, a process with respect to the appropriate elaboration of international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress for damage resulting from transboundary movements

of living modified organisms. Accordingly, the first meeting of the COP-MOP established an Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress to fulfill the mandate under Article 27. After that several meetings were held over many years to finalize the Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress.

The objective of this Supplementary Protocol is to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, by providing international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress relating to living modified organisms. Thus, the Supplementary Protocol adopts an administrative approach to addressing response measures in the event of damage or sufficient likelihood of damage to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity resulting from living modified organisms that find their origin in transboundary movements. The new treaty shall be open for signature at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 7 March 2011 to 6 March 2012 and will enter into force 90 days after being ratified by at least 40 Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. This Protocol is seen as playing a function of preventing damage as well as further confidence-building measure, in the development and application of modern biotechnology.

English booklet on **"Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety"** can be downloaded from CBD site (<http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/>)

Strategic plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020



The Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties 5 (COP-MOP 5) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted the **Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020** based on the submissions from Parties, the analysis of the first national reports, the successive decisions taken by the COP-MOP to the Protocol at its last four meetings, and through general discussions and comments received from Parties, other Governments and stakeholders. The Strategic Plan comprises a vision, a mission statement and five strategic objectives.

Vision

Making biological diversity adequately protected from any adverse effects of living modified organisms.

Mission

To strengthen global, regional & national action and capacity in ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health and specifically focusing on transboundary movements.

Strategic Objectives

The focal areas underlying the five strategic objectives are as follows:

1. Facilitating the establishment and further development of systems for the implementation of the Protocol;
2. Capacity-building;
3. Compliance and review;
4. Information sharing; and
5. Outreach and cooperation.

For each strategic objective a number of **operational objectives, expected outcomes and indicators** are also outlined. The Strategic Plan also takes into account the experience gained through the development, implementation and revision of the Strategic Plan of the Convention. This Strategic Plan will be implemented through a ten-year programme of work for the Protocol, supported by biennial work plans where a mid-term evaluation will be undertaken five years after the adoption of the Strategic Plan.

For further details please follow this link:

<http://bch.cbd.int/protocol>

Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management of LMOs



Under the notification of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) secretariat, an online discussion on risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (LMOs) took place from 28th March to 18th April 2011 through an open-ended online expert forum. This is a virtual platform where experts will interact and exchange opinions on specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management of LMOs. The online forum is part of a continuous process established in decision BS-IV/11. The online forum is publicly accessible through the BCH, but posting is restricted to registered

participants only. The Open-ended Online Group objective is to (i) revise and test the first version of the Guidance on the basis of the results of the scientific review process, and to (ii) assess the overall applicability and utility of the Guidance to living modified organisms across different taxa and receiving environments. To achieve the above objective discussions took place on the following topics:

Topic 1: Revision of the Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms

Topic 2: Possible mechanisms, including criteria, for future updates of the lists of background materials

Topic 3: New specific topics of risk assessment for the development of further guidance

The results of the online discussions served as a basis for the face-to-face deliberations of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) at its third meeting (30 May - 3 June 2011). Currently, no online discussions going on. A new round of discussions will be announced soon.

Online Portal on Socio-Economic Considerations



A series of online discussion groups on socio-economic considerations initiated by CBD secretariat took place from 21st March to 8th May 2011. The purpose of the online discussion groups on socio-economic considerations is to: facilitate a global exchange of information and experiences on socio-economic considerations, develop a clearer understanding of the different perspectives on the issue, and identify issues for further discussion during the real-time online regional conferences and the workshop.

There were four rounds of discussion groups on socio-economic considerations under various themes. The themes under each round of discussion were as follows:

Round 1 (21 March-3 April 2011)

Theme 1:

Socio-economic considerations in the context of Article 26 of the Biosafety Protocol

Theme 2:

Socio-economic considerations and other international obligations

Round 2 (4-17 April 2011)

Theme 3:

Experiences and lessons learned from taking socio-economic considerations into account in decision-making on LMOs

Round 3 (18 April-1 May 2011)

Theme 4:

Capacity-building for assessing possible socio-economic impacts and evaluating assessments

Theme 5:

Target groups for capacity-building on socio-economic considerations

Theme 6:

Capacity-building initiatives related to socio-economic considerations

Round 4 (2-8 May 2011)

Theme 7:

Open forum for other issues and questions

The next activity will be a series of regional online real-time conferences to be conducted between 14th June and 7th July.

Eighth Meeting of the Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety, Moldova

The Eighth Meeting of the Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety was held on 7-8 April 2011 in Chisinau (Chisinau), Moldova. The meeting was organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and in-depth discussion was held on the following issues of:

- i) Organization of the workshop on capacity-building for research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of living modified organisms (LMOs) and other related activities; and
- ii) The second comprehensive review of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol.

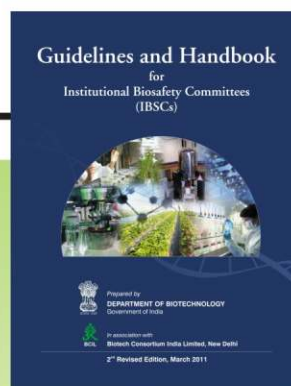
From India Dr. Ranjini Warriar, National focal point of Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) participated in the meeting.

Series of Crop Specific Biology Documents

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) have brought out a "Series of Crop Specific Biology Documents" with an objective to make available information about the crop to applicants as information in applications to regulatory authorities; to regulators as a guide and reference source in their regulatory reviews; and for information sharing, research reference and public information. The five crop-specific documents featuring cotton, rice, maize, okra and brinjal have been prepared through a consultative process with various stakeholder viz. agriculture research institutions, state agricultural universities, industry etc. These biology documents have sections on taxonomy, geographic origin and distribution; reproductive biology; crossability and hybridization; ecological interactions; human health considerations and cultivation of the crop

in India. Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) assisted through out the preparation of these documents.

These crop specific biology documents is expected to be useful tool for both the developers and regulators in planning the safety assessment of their products and evaluating the data submitted to them



Revised Handbook for IBSC Members

Handbook for IBSC members was brought in 2005, after that several new Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBSCs) have been constituted and a need was felt to provide further statutory guidance for strengthening the regulatory compliance. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India in association with Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL) has prepared the revised Handbook for IBSC Members where "Guidelines for Institutional Biosafety Committees" have been incorporated. This guideline streamlines the activities and compliance requirements as per Rules, 1989.

This revised Handbook for IBSC Members is expected to be extremely useful for the members of IBSCs but also familiarize the industry, scientists, policy makers and students with the updated regulatory procedures.

Upcoming Events

Title	Organized by	Date and Venue
Training Workshop on "Role of Risk Analysis in the Development and Implementation of Food Safety Programmes and Standards"	BCIL in collaboration with University of Nebraska-Lincoln and University of Maryland	June 20-22, 2011, Hyderabad
TERI-ITEC Courses 2011-12 Course II - Applications of biotechnology and its regulation	The Energy and Resources Institute	July 25 - August 12, 2011 Gurgaon
Third meeting of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management of Living Modified Organisms	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity	30 May - 3 June 2011 Mexico City, Mexico
Biosafety: An International Short Course in Environmental Aspects of Agricultural Biotechnology	Michigan State University Institute of International Agriculture in Collaboration with the Plant Breeding and Genetics Program	July 31 - August 5, 2011, Michigan, USA
First international workshop on the food and environmental safety assessment of genetically modified animals	Argentine Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, (SAGyP, Biotechnology Directorate); ICGEB; United Nations University Biotechnology Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNU-BIOLAC) and International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI Argentina).	September 5-9, 2011 Buenos Aires City, Argentina.
Biosafety Workshop "Problem Formulation: A Strategic Approach to Risk Assessment of GMOs"	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, Trieste, Italy	September 19-23, 2011 Trieste, Italy

Recently released reports/articles



Report from the commission to the European parliament and the council on socio-economic implications of GMO cultivation on the basis of Member States contributions, as requested by the Conclusions of the Environment Council of December 2008, European Commission, Brussels 15 April 2011. http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biotechnology/reports_studies/docs/socio_economic_report_GMO_en.pdf

Annual report on Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2010, by Clive James, The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), February 2011. <http://www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/briefs/42/default.asp>

Impacts of GM crops on biodiversity. Carpenter, Janet (2011). GM Crops 2:1, 1-17.

<https://www.landesbioscience.com/journals/gmcrops/CarpenterGMC2-1.pdf>

Peer-reviewed surveys indicate positive impact of commercialized GM crops. Janet E Carpenter, Nature Biotechnology (2010), Volume: 28, Pages: 319–321

<http://www.nature.com/nbt/journal/v28/n4/full/nbt0410-319.html>

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Disclaimer : The information in this newsletter has been compiled from various sources and does not necessarily depict views of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India.