

BIO SAFETY



जहाँ है हरियाली।
वहाँ है खुशहाली।

A Quarterly
Newsletter

Newsletter

From the Desk of Editor



I am pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has submitted India's second national report on the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The report has been prepared in consultation with experts, concerned Ministries and other stakeholders viz. enforcement agencies, research institutions, industry etc. Three back to back workshops were hosted by MoEF in November 2011 for Secretariat of the CBD on important issues viz. socioeconomic considerations, liability and redress and identification and documentation of LMOs. More than 70 international and national participants benefitted from these meetings. We shall be undertaking series of such activities in 2012 in preparation towards the upcoming COP 12-MOP6 to be organized in October 2012 at Hyderabad. This issue of newsletter focuses on providing brief overview of the above mentioned activities.

Wish you a Happy & Prosperous Year 2012

Hem Pande

Joint Secretary

Ministry of Environment and Forests

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CBD Secretariat Announces COP-MOP6 Agenda



In preparation for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 6), the Secretariat of the CBD has notified the provisional agenda for the meeting. The agenda can be viewed at <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/meetings/documents.shtml?eventid=4715>

India is hosting the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 6) from 1-5 October 2012, in Hyderabad.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Second National Report on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety requires each Party to monitor the implementation of its obligations under the Protocol and periodically report the same. Article 33 focusses on Monitoring and Reporting reads as:

“Each Party shall monitor the implementation of its obligations under this Protocol, and shall, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol on measures that it has taken to implement the Protocol”.

The important elements of decisions on reporting by Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties (COP-MOP) indicate that reports are to be submitted every four years and the deadline for submission shall be one year before the MOP at which they will be considered. It has been further indicated that reports should be prepared through a consultative process involving all relevant government agencies and stakeholders (Decisions BS-I/9 and Decision BS-V/14). In addition to reviewing each Party's compliance with its obligations under the Protocol, reporting also helps to identify issues that impede compliance, devise measures that facilitate compliance and assess overall status of implementation of the Protocol.

In line with the above, the First National Report was submitted by Parties in 2007-08 and the Second National Report was due for submission in 2011. Financial support from Global Environment Fund (GEF) has also been provided to assist GEF-eligible Parties in their consultative information-gathering process leading to the preparation of second national reports. The format of the Second National Report consists of a series of questions based on the requirements of the Protocol as well as questions that relate to indicators of the Strategic Plan. The information has been sought under the following sections:

- i. General Provisions, Pharmaceuticals and Transit and Contained Use (Article 2, 5 and 6).
- ii. Advance Informed Agreement Notification and Decision Procedure (Article 7-10).
- iii. Procedure for LMOs Intended for Direct Use as Food or Feed, or for Processing (Article 11).
- iv. Review of Decisions and Simplified Procedure (Article 12 and 13).
- v. Risk Assessment and Risk Management (Article 15 and 16).
- vi. Unintentional Transboundary Movements and Emergency Measures (Article 17).





- vii. Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification (Article 18).
- viii. Information Sharing and the Biosafety Clearing-House (Article 20).
- ix. Confidential Information (Article 21).
- x. Capacity-Building and Public Awareness and Participation (Article 22 and 23).
- xi. Illegal Transboundary Movements (Article 25).
- xii. Socio-Economic Considerations (Article 26).
- xiii. Liability and Redress (Article 27).
- xiv. Monitoring and Reporting (Article 33).

India being a Party to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety also accessed funds from GEF and the Second National Report has been prepared through a consultative process. The process of preparation of the report included collection of information from relevant documents and discussions with subject specific experts and representatives from concerned Ministries/Departments and institutions. Copy of the draft report was circulated to various stakeholders including Ministries/Departments, enforcement

agencies, academic institutions involved in biotechnology research, industry, industry associations, civil societies, farmers associations, NGOs etc. Technical and legal experts were consulted at various stages during the preparation and validation process. Important line ministries and agencies whose inputs were critical to the preparation of the second national report included Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Department of Biotechnology, Customs departments, National Biodiversity Authority, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources etc. participated actively during the process.

The unedited report was submitted on October 31, 2011 as per the deadline provided by the Secretariat. The report was subsequently validated by organizing a series of consultations with stakeholders and review by an expert group during November – December 2011. The first consultation was organized with senior experts on November 29, 2011 followed by a “Consultative workshop with stakeholders” on December 8, 2011. The consultative workshop was attended by 50 participants.

Asia-Pacific Workshop on the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress



Thailand. A participant from the Third World Network, a civil-society organization also attended.

The objective of this Asia-Pacific workshop was to increase awareness and understanding of the Nagoya -Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol and thereby expediting its signature and ratification and its implementation by the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Accordingly, presentations on various topics relevant to liability and redress in general, and the Supplementary Protocol in particular, were made. Following each presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on the Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was organized on November 17-18, 2011 by the Ministry of Environment & Forests in collaboration with Biotech Consortium India Limited.

The workshop was attended by 19 participants - 18 of them from 12 country Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The following countries were represented: Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic and

The workshop also provided a forum for participants to be introduced to or to follow up on, as appropriate, the implementation of two decisions of the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Biosafety, namely the decision on the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol for the Period 2011-2020, and the decision on monitoring and reporting where the Parties adopted a format for the second national report by each Party on the implementation of its obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and requested submission of national reports by the end of September 2011.



Opening remarks by Shri Hem Pande, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests



The workshop was opened by Shri Hem Pande, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests and the national focal point for the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Shri Pande welcomed the participants and thanked them for their presence at the workshop. He recalled the winding and arduous negotiations on liability and redress, which finally led to the adoption of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010. He mentioned the complexities involved in regulating activities associated with modern biotechnology and the dilemmas that many countries faced.

Shri Pande noted that India is a mega biodiversity country on the one hand and a growing biotechnology centre on the other that recognizes the importance of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by putting in place the necessary legal measures such as liability and redress rules in the context of fulfilling the obligations that the country undertook both under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. He assured participants that India, as the incoming president of the sixth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Biosafety and the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, will continue to promote regional cooperation for effective implementation of the Biosafety Protocol. Shri Pande expressed his gratitude to partner organizations that contributed to the organization of the workshop in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Forests of India. He also expressed his appreciation to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for assisting Parties in their efforts to implement their obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and for organizing the workshop to raise understanding regarding the new Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress.

The workshop started with presentations on basic concepts and facts relevant to liability and redress, the negotiations on liability and redress and overview of the Supplementary Protocol by the experts from Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. These were followed by stakeholders' perspective on the significance of the Supplementary Protocol. Following the presentations and discussions held throughout the day, participants were asked to undertake some exercises in the form of hypothetical cases that depict different scenarios of damage and potential cases of liability. The purpose of the exercise was to enable participants to relate the provisions of the Supplementary Protocol to different specific situations and to measure their understanding of the Supplementary Protocol in the context of its possible application or implementation at the domestic level. Accordingly, participants formed three small groups and each group was assigned with a case. After discussions within the small groups, each group

presented, through its rapporteur, its views and suggestions on how the issues highlighted in the cases might be resolved. The deliberations of the workshop were moderated by Dr Ranjini Warriar, Director, MoEF and SCBD officials.

At the end of the workshop participants shared their experiences/approaches within the region in providing rules on liability and redress. A set of conclusions and recommendations were adopted by the participants indicating that the workshop was useful and timely in enhancing their understanding of the requirements of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol and providing them with information that would help expedite efforts being made in a number of countries at national level towards the signature and ratification of the Supplementary Protocol; The report of the workshop is available at:

<http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/meetings/documents.shtml?eventid=4913>.

Workshop on Capacity-building for Research and Information Exchange on Socio-Economic Impacts of LMOs

The CBD COP-MOP 5 at Nagoya, October, 2010 agreed to adopt the Decision BS V/3.IV "Cooperation on identification of capacity-building needs for research and information exchange on socio-economic considerations" (http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art26/bsv3.shtml). The Decision mandated organizing a regionally-balanced workshop on capacity-building for research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of LMOs prior to the COP-MOP 6, to be held in India in 2012. Hence a workshop on "Capacity-building for Research and Information Exchange on Socio-Economic Impacts of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety" was held from 14 to 16 November 2011. The workshop was organized by Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India in collaboration with Research Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and was co-hosted by Government of Norway, at Hotel Samrat, New Delhi, India.

There were 45 participants in the workshop, who were invited from among those who took part in the online discussion groups and the regional online real-time conferences. The participants were from 24 countries representing various stakeholders. There were two Co-Chairs, namely Dr. P. G. Chengappa from India and Mr. Casper Linnestad from Norway. The workshop included presentations by resource persons, plenary sessions for sharing experiences and small breakout group discussions.

The objectives of the workshop were:

1. Analysis of capacity building activities
2. Needs and priorities regarding Socio-Economic Considerations and options for co-operation in this &
3. Exchange and analysis of information on use of Socio-Economic Considerations

Resource persons and representatives of national governments and organizations made presentations on various themes relevant to the Workshop. Participants examined the available information and case-studies on the application of socio-economic assessments in a range of fields and in capacity building. The participants discussed activities that could be undertaken on this issue



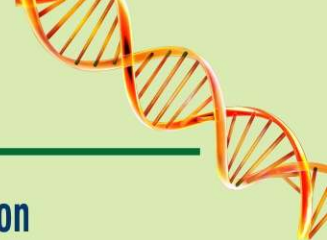
at the national, regional and international levels. During the workshop it was evident from presentations that many countries have already included socio-economic considerations in their respective regulatory frameworks, while some are in process of doing so. The participants acknowledged that further work is needed on socio-economic considerations in order to help Parties that have already taken or wish to take measures to consider socio-economic impacts of LMOs in their decision-making.

Based on the presentations and discussions the following suggestions were made in the workshop for developing a framework to provide conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations,

1. Any further work should take into account existing information, tools, methodologies, experience, expertise and capacities available in other relevant sectors,
2. The views and interests of stakeholders as well as indigenous and local communities needs to be taken into account.
3. Take stock of existing legislation and policies with provisions on socio-economic considerations, capacity-building activities, existing expertise and other policy initiatives concerning social and economic impact assessments to develop a global overview.

It was also recognized that there is a need for stock-taking of existing capacity and resources available in the countries in assessing capacity-building needs.





Asia Sub regional Training-of-Trainers Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Asia Sub regional Training-of-Trainers Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, was organized at New Delhi from 21 to 25 November 2011. Customs officials and regulators from 13 countries of the region viz. Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Viet Nam and Yemen participated in the workshop.



The main objective of the workshop was to introduce customs officers and other border-control personnel to the requirements of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety regarding the identification and documentation of LMOs and to techniques and methodologies that may be used for the implementation of these requirements. It also aims at facilitating the exchange of information and national experiences on the implementation of the identification and documentation requirements under the Protocol. The workshop was jointly organized by National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi and International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi. Ms. Kathryn Garforth, Mr. Charles Gbedemah, and Erie Tamale represented CBD Secretariat, Montreal. The workshop



was inaugurated by, Mr. M.F. Farooqui, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India, Dr. Ranjini Warriar, Director MoEF and Mr. Charles Gbedemah gave the overview of the workshop. Dr. K. C. Bansal, Director, NBPGR welcomed and addressed the participants. An overview of the objectives, the programme and the expected outcomes of the workshop was presented by Secretariat, followed by sharing of national experiences and group discussions. Presentations on existing documentation systems and scientific methods for sampling and detecting LMOs were made by resource persons from NBPGR and ICGEB, New Delhi. Interactive hands-on training sessions to introduce relevant tools and methods for identification and documentation of LMOs were conducted in Dr. Siva Reddy's Laboratory, at ICGEB for ELISA based methods and in Dr. Gurinder Jit Randhawa's Laboratory at NBPGR for DNA based methods. The participants also visited and familiarised with the Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage Station at Rangpuri and Depot at Tuglakabad where samples are received and documented before being sent to the laboratory; Plant Quarantine Facility at NBPGR, New Delhi, where samples are received, tested and reports prepared; and Phytotron Facility at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Pusa Campus, New Delhi.



Upcoming Events

Title	Organized/hosted by	Date & Venue
Second International Conference on "Agrochemicals Protecting Crops, Health and Natural Environment: Role of Chemistry for Sustainable Agriculture"	Indian Agricultural Research Institute, The Society for the Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture Indian Council of Agricultural Research	February 15-18, 2012, New Delhi
International Conference on Plant Biotechnology for Food Security: New Frontiers	Society for Plant Biochemistry and Biotechnology, National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology	February 21-24, 2012, New Delhi
Conference on "Biotech Crops for Food Security In India"	Foundation For Biotechnology Awareness And Education	February 27, 2012, Bangalore
National Conference on "Genomics and Genetic Engineering Strategies for Crop Improvement"	Periyar University, Salem. Tamil Nadu	February 27-28, 2012 Salem
Seed Industry Program 2012	Cornell University, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences Manager-Center For Executive Education Sathguru Management Consultants	March 5 - 8, 2012, Goa
National Seminar on New Frontiers and Future Challenges in Horticultural Crops	College of Agriculture, PAU, Ludhiana Sponsored by National Horticulture Mission	March 6 - 8, 2012, Ludhiana
Second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (ICNP-2)	Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Ministry of Environment & Forests	June 30-July 06, 2012, New Delhi
International Symposium on New Paradigms in Sugarcane Research	Society for Sugarcane Research and Development & Sugarcane Breeding Institute	October 15-18, 2012, Coimbatore
INTERNATIONAL Biosafety Workshop "Problem Formulation: A Strategic Approach to Risk Assessment of GMOs"	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) in collaboration with the Ministry for Environment, for the Protection of the Territory and for the Sea, Government of Italy	April 16-20, 2012 Trieste Italy
Workshop "Biosafety of Genetically Engineered Crops: Best Practices from Laboratory to Farmer's Fields"	ICGEB In collaboration with GENETECH, Colombo, Sri Lanka, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Michigan State University, USA, The National Science Foundation, Colombo, Sri Lanka and Embassy of USA, Colombo, Sri Lanka	May 21-25, 2012 Colombo, Sri Lanka
12th International Symposium on Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (ISBGMO12)	International Society for Biosafety Research	Sept. 17-20, 2012 St Louis, Missouri, USA

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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.