



Convention on Biological Diversity

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FIFTH COORDINATION MEETING FOR GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING OR FUNDING BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

San José, Costa Rica, 9-11 March 2009

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE COORDINATION MEETINGS

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for ease of reference of participants in the fifth Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-building Activities, the operational procedures and guidelines for the Coordination Meetings, which were adopted by participants in the first such meeting, held in Montreal on 26-27 January 2005, and circulated as annex I to the report of that meeting (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/1/5).
2. Annex II to the present note contains a list of past members of the Steering Committee established pursuant to paragraph 10 of the operational procedures and guidelines.

* UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/1.

Annex I

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE COORDINATION MEETINGS

Purpose of the meetings

1. The primary objective of the coordination meetings will be to facilitate interaction and exchange of information, views and experience with a view to promoting synergies, complementarities and partnerships between various capacity building initiatives and enhancing their impact. Specifically, the meetings will *inter alia* seek to:

(a) Enhance mutual awareness among participating organizations of the ongoing and planned activities with a view to identifying their coverage, overlaps and deficiencies and gaps;

(b) Minimize the unnecessary overlaps and duplication of effort and resources, including through synchronizing the ongoing initiatives;

(c) Facilitate sharing, leveraging and learning from each other's experience, good practices and lessons learned from the biosafety capacity-building initiatives;

(d) Enhance mutual understanding of the emerging capacity-building issues and priority needs of countries and endeavor to identify solutions and steps to address them;

(e) Promote cross-fertilization of ideas to improve coordination and delivery of capacity-building initiatives with a view to enhancing their effectiveness in responding to the needs and priorities of countries and realizing maximum impact.

Frequency, timing and duration of the meetings

2. The meetings will be convened whenever necessary, subject to availability of funding, and will take advantage of the opportunities presented by other forums where most participants are present. Initially it is envisaged that at least one meeting a year may be needed. Each meeting will normally not exceed three days.

3. Announcements of the meetings and the provisional agenda will be publicized through the Protocol web site and the Biosafety Clearing-House, at least two months before the meeting.

4. Intersessionally, participating organizations will communicate and exchange information and views through the electronic communications tools developed for the Biosafety Capacity-Building Network, including the restricted website, e-mail listserv and/or electronic discussion forums.

5. The meetings will be held sufficiently in advance of the next meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol so that issues requiring its attention are discussed and relevant recommendations forwarded to it for consideration.

Responsibility for convening the meetings

6. The meetings will be organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with other relevant organizations, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its Implementing Agencies, subject to availability of funding.

7. Organizations interested in sponsoring or co-organizing coordination meetings at the international or regional level will be invited to inform the Secretariat and enter into a memorandum of

cooperation. Invitations for attending such meetings will be extended by both the Secretariat and main sponsoring organization.

Participation

8. The meetings will be open to governments and organizations that are implementing or funding capacity-building projects for the effective implementation of the Protocol. Potential participants will be invited to express their interest through the Secretariat along with details of their ongoing activities.

9. To the extent possible, members of the liaison group on capacity-building for biosafety will be encouraged to attend the coordination meetings as one of the strategies for cross-linking the coordination meetings with the other elements of the Coordination Mechanism.

Election of officials

10. A steering committee comprising a Chair, a vice-Chair and five members will be elected every two years, with due regard to geographic, thematic and gender balance. The Steering Committee shall include representatives from recipient countries. In order to maintain institutional memory, at least one third of the members will be retained whenever a new committee is elected. The Chair and vice-Chair of each meeting, with the assistance of the Secretariat, shall be responsible for preparing and circulating to participants the reports of the meeting. The steering committee will be responsible for providing the necessary strategic direction and overseeing, until the next coordination meeting, implementation of the follow-up activities that fall outside the primary responsibility of the Secretariat.

Agendas of the meetings

11. The Steering Committee will develop the agenda for the meetings in consultation with the Secretariat and the organization(s) offering to sponsor/ host a coordination meeting. For the time being, the following will be standing substantive items on the agenda:

(a) Report of the previous meeting, including consideration of the progress made in implementing the agreed outcomes and a review of the changes that occurred as a result;

(b) Presentations by participants on their ongoing and planned activities, emerging opportunities for collaboration and other relevant developments since the last meeting;

(c) Consideration of the priority needs of countries and specific requests for capacity-building support.

12. As much as possible, the deliberations of the meetings will focus on understanding the key capacity-building issues and priority needs of countries and on identifying how best to assist countries to build their capacities to effectively implement the Protocol. The meetings will also seek to facilitate participants in identifying opportunities for establishing partnerships and collaboration with different players.

Procedures and style of conducting the meetings

13. The meetings shall be as informal and flexible as possible in order to allow a free interaction and sharing of information, experience and ideas. They will not aim at reaching consensus on particular issues but at promoting broad exchange of information, views and opinions and allowing a free flow of ideas through brainstorming. Different viewpoints of participants will be recorded and emerging issues

requiring further consideration identified. The meetings may come up with specific recommendations and follow-up actions, as appropriate.

Working language

14. The working language of the international coordination meetings will be English. Regional coordination meetings may be organized in the language spoken by the majority of participants from the region.

Documentation and reports

15. The Secretariat will prepare, with guidance from the steering committee, relevant documentation on the agreed issues for the agenda to facilitate the discussions at the meetings. The documents will be distributed to participants at least four weeks before the meeting.

16. Prior to each meeting, participants will be invited to submit to the Secretariat relevant information and documents, including summaries of their activities undertaken in the preceding period, new planned activities or work programmes and an indication of potential opportunities for collaboration to be distributed to all participants.

17. The reports of the meetings will be distributed to all participants within two weeks of the close of the meeting. Specific recommendations requiring consideration by the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Protocol will be transmitted formally through the Secretariat. The reports and other relevant outputs of the meetings may also be submitted as information documents and made public through the Biosafety Clearing-House, as appropriate.

Financing of the meetings

18. Organization of the meetings will, *inter alia*, be funded through voluntary contributions from the sponsors/co-organizers of each meeting and from donors. Participants will be expected to cover the costs of their participation in the meetings.

Annex II

**LIST OF PREVIOUS MEMBERS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE
COORDINATION MEETINGS**

A. Second and Third Coordination Meetings

1. Dr. Hartmut Meyer (Germany) – Western Europe and Others Group, Chairperson
2. Ms. Stacey Wells-Moultrie (Bahamas) – Latin America and the Caribbean region, Vice Chairperson
3. Dr. Chris Viljoen (South Africa) – African region
4. Dr. S.R. Rao (India) – Asia Pacific region
5. Ms. Helle Biseth (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) – Donors
6. Dr. Christopher Briggs (UNEP/GEF) – UN agencies
7. Dr. Joel Cohen (International Food Policy Research Institute, IFPRI) – Intergovernmental organizations.

B. Fourth and Fifth Coordination Meetings

1. Dr. Hartmut Meyer (Germany) – Western Europe and Others Group, Chairperson
2. Prof. Chris Viljoen (South Africa) – African region
3. Dr. Manoranjan Hota (India) – Asia Pacific region
4. Ms. Lenia Arce Hernandez (Cuba) – Latin America and the Caribbean region
5. Dr. Darja Stanic Racman (Slovenia) – Central and Eastern Europe region;
6. Ms. Helle Biseth (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) – Donors
7. Dr. Fee-Chon Low (UNEP/GEF) – UN agencies
8. Mr. John Komen (International Food Policy Research Institute, IFPRI) – Intergovernmental organizations.
