



## CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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### LIAISON GROUP ON CAPACITY-BUILDING

#### FOR BIOSAFETY

Second meeting

Montreal, 27 to 28 January 2005

Agenda item 3.1 of the provisional agenda \*

### **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LIAISON GROUP ON CAPACITY- BUILDING FOR BIOSAFETY AND ITS OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND MECHANISMS**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in its decision BS-I/5 on capacity-building, adopted a Coordination Mechanism to facilitate exchange of information with a view to promoting partnerships and maximizing complementarities and synergies between various capacity building initiatives. The Coordination Mechanism consists of, *inter alia*, five complementary elements, including the Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety. The overall nature, mandate and general modalities of operation for the Liaison Group were described in Annex IV to the decision.

2. The present note has been prepared to elaborate, within the overall mandate, draft specific terms of reference for the Liaison Group and the operational procedures and mechanisms that will facilitate its functioning. The Executive Secretary will take into account, as appropriate, the views of participants at the meeting in finalizing the draft. These may be further revised in future as required, based on operational experience.

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## 2. DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

3. The overall mandate of the Liaison Group as stated in decision BS-I/5 is to provide expert advice to the Executive Secretary on ways and means to enhance the coordination and effective implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Some of its tasks specified in the decision include: exchanging ideas and providing advice on overall strategic approaches as well as conceptual and possible practical operational measures for enhancing coordination of the capacity-building initiatives.

4. The Liaison Group on Capacity-building for Biosafety will be expected to undertake, *inter alia*, the following tasks, within its overall mandate and upon request by the Executive Secretary:

(a) Provide advice on conceptual frameworks and practical measures to enhance coordination and cooperation in building capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol, including clarification of relevant technical issues and terminology;

(b) Identify and advise the Executive Secretary on available relevant scientific, technical and other information to ensure its use, as appropriate, in the preparation of documentation on capacity-building for relevant meetings under the Protocol;

(c) Peer-review, as necessary, relevant pre-session documents on capacity-building;

(d) Assist the Executive Secretary, when necessary, in implementing specific capacity-building activities requested by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Protocol;

(e) Review the development and implementation of other elements of the Coordination Mechanism and provide, as appropriate, feedback and advice to the Executive Secretary on possible improvements;

(f) Advise the Executive Secretary in developing tools and guidance to assist Parties and other Governments to assess their capacity-building needs;

(g) Assist in identifying opportunities for advancing capacity-building efforts for the effective implementation of the Protocol and for fostering coordination and cooperation;

(h) Propose ways and means to assist Parties in identifying and mobilizing the necessary financial, technical and other resources for building capacities to implement the Protocol;

(i) Perform any other relevant tasks as may be requested by the Executive Secretary in accordance with the decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Protocol for the purpose of promoting and advancing capacity-building initiatives for the effective implementation of the Protocol.

## 3. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES AND MECHANISMS

5. In accordance with decision BS I/5, the Liaison Group will be convened by, and will report to, the Executive Secretary. The normal operating procedures would allow for at least one face-to-face meeting per year. However the Executive Secretary may convene more meetings when a need arises for advice on specific capacity-building issues related to the coordination and effective implementation of the capacity-building Action Plan, subject to availability of funding. Each meeting will typically last no more than two days.

6. The Liaison Group will operate through face-to-face meetings and also through electronic means, including teleconferences, e-mail or e-discussion forums. A restricted website for the Liaison Group will be established to facilitate on-line discussions and minimize on the need for face-to-face meetings.

7. Each meeting of the Liaison Group will elect its Chair and Rapporteur from among the participants present. The Chair will be responsible for conveying the report of the meeting to the Executive Secretary. The Chair will also be responsible for mobilizing input from other members of the Liaison Group in cases of agreed follow-up activities and for moderating discussions that may be held via e-mail and other electronic means.

8. The composition of the Liaison Group will vary according to the expertise required to address a specific issue or issues. Participants will be selected on the basis of their demonstrated expertise and will serve in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their respective Governments or organizations. The Executive Secretary will endeavor to ensure a balanced geographical distribution between regions, and a fair representation of relevant stakeholders. Every effort will be made to ensure that any one meeting of the Liaison Group includes some of the participants that attended the previous meetings in order to maintain some degree of continuity and institutional memory.

#### **4. POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE MEETING**

9. Participants at the meeting may wish to consider the scope and feasibility of the terms of reference and the operational procedures and mechanisms proposed above, seek any clarifications and provide views and suggestions for improvement based on their practical experience.

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