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STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING THE ROSTER OF BIOSAFETY EXPERTS

A synthesis of the views and suggestions on the expert selection criteria and minimum requirements and a possible quality control mechanism

Note by the Executive Secretary

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   At its third meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) adopted decision BS-III/4, which among other things, requested the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building for Biosafety to develop, for consideration at the fourth meeting of the COP-MOP, draft criteria and minimum requirements (including minimum qualifications or experience), for experts to be included on the roster. The draft criteria and minimum requirements are intended to assist countries in making their nominations to the roster and in re-assessing the earlier nominations.

2.   In paragraph 2 of the decision, COP-MOP also requested the Liaison Group to explore the possibility of establishing a quality control mechanism for the roster and, if feasible, propose modalities of such a mechanism for consideration at COP-MOP 4. In doing so, the Group was requested to take into account of the suggestions that were made during the internal review of the roster prior to COP-MOP 3. Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations were invited to submit to the Secretariat their views and suggestions on both of the above issues.

3.   This document presents a synthesis of the views and suggestions that were received before 31 December 2006. Submissions were made by the governments of Canada, Japan, Norway, Thailand, Togo and the European Commission. Two organizations, the Global Industry Coalition and the Public Research and Regulation Initiative (PRRI), also made submissions. A compilation of these submissions is presented in information document: UNEP/CBD/BS/LG-CB/4/INF/1. The document also includes brief descriptions of the rosters of experts of other organizations. A draft revised nomination form is annexed for the consideration by the present meeting.

II. ROSTERS OF EXPERTS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: A BRIEF REVIEW

4. Different organizations have in recent years developed rosters of experts for different purposes. Examples include rosters for the following organizations: the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-STAP), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCU) and the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). Others include: the FAO Food Safety Expert Roster, the UNDP-wide Integrated Expert Rosters and the World Health Organization (WHO) Roster of Experts in Biological Sciences.

The GEF-STAP Expert Roster [1]/

5. The STAP Expert Roster was established in 1996. Experts from the roster are hired to review and make recommendations on the scientific and technical soundness of GEF projects above US$ 1 million and enabling activities above US $450,000. Nominations to the roster are made by the GEF Implementing Agencies (UNEP, UNDP and World Bank), the executing agencies (ADB, AfDB, EBRD, IADB, FAO, IFAD and UNIDO) and by individual STAP members. Occasionally, the STAP also issues open "Calls for Expression of Interest to serve on the Roster of Experts". [2]/

6. The STAP oversees the recruitment of new experts to the roster and their selection for specific project proposals. It is responsible for reviewing the applications and selecting individuals for inclusion on the roster. The selection of experts depends on their scientific and technical expertise relevant to the GEF strategic priorities, their ability to assess projects within a global context and the overall thematic and geographical balance of the roster. Consideration is also given to their knowledge and experience of the country and/or region where the project would be implemented. Nominees are required to submit their curriculum vitae (CVs) to the STAP Secretariat. The other specific criteria used include the following:

(a) Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications (Ph.D. or equivalent).

(b) Major publications/reports in the relevant subject area.

(c) Professional experience (at least 10 years).

(d) Project experience, as either as an advisor or a participant (at least 5 years).

(e) Participation in relevant governmental or non-governmental scientific and technical committees at national, regional and international levels.

(f) Involvement in, or familiarity in, dealing with key stakeholders in the field of global environmental issues (e.g. non-governmental organizations, community groups, local governments and private industry).

(g) Experience in networking and reaching out to individuals and groups of scientists familiar with the regional aspects of his/her field of expertise.

7. The procedure of selecting experts from the roster for specific assignments is as follows:

(a) The STAP Secretariat conducts an initial search of the roster for suitable experts (project reviewers), depending on the type of the projects to be reviewed, and forwards the search results to the appropriate STAP members.

(b) STAP members select three experts for each project concept and inform the STAP Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies of their selection. If no suitable experts can be found in the

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[1]/ Details about the STAP expert roster, including its operational guidelines can be accessed at: http://stapgef.unep.org/roster/).

[2]/ See example of a recent call at: http://www.scidev.net/misc/AnnouncementforSTAPRosterofExperts.pdf

roster, STAP members search for and identify experts outside the roster through other scientific networks. The STAP considers and decides whether to add the "approved outside experts" to the roster on a case-by-case basis.

8.   STAP maintains the quality of the roster through a number of quality control mechanisms. These include: (i) the performance review of the experts selected from the roster, (ii) standardization of the content of the reviews and (iii) conflict of interest provisions. STAP Members and the STAP Secretariat monitor and assess the quality of the expertise available on the roster.

9.   The performance management system, led by the STAP Secretariat consists of the following elements:

        (a)   Individual task managers/program officers of the Implementing and Executing Agencies fill out a standard evaluation form for each roster review and submit it to the STAP Secretariat within two weeks of the review. They evaluate the performance of the expert and may recommend him/her for future GEF project assessments. The respondents are asked to comment on how the review strengthened the scientific and technical quality of a given project and how the review affected the overall development of the project.

        (b)   The STAP Secretariat analyzes the results and publishes the findings in the Annual Review of the roster, which forms part of an information document that is submitted to the GEF Council every year.

        (c)   STAP members may also be assigned to evaluate the performance of the expert reviewers using the evaluation forms completed by the task managers. After doing so, they may request further information from the Implementing and Executing Agencies.

10.   Conflict of interest provisions are implemented as follows:

        (a)   Upon the request by STAP to review a project, the expert reviewer is required to bring to the attention of the Implementing and Executing Agencies any potential conflict of interest of which he or she is aware.

        (b)   Upon completion of the review, the reviewer is required to disclose any contracts he or she made with the implementing bodies as well as any connections with any other parties involved in the proposed project. The nationality and country of domicile also have to be mentioned.

UNCCD Roster of Experts 3/

11.   The UNCCD Secretariat maintains a "Roster of Independent Experts" with expertise and experience in relevant fields for combating desertification. It was established by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD in 1997. Its purpose is to provide the COP with an up-to-date list of independent experts in the various fields of specialization relating to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, who may be selected to serve as members of ad hoc panels. These ad hoc panels are established by the Conference of the Parties to provide it with information and advice on specific issues regarding the state of the art in relevant fields of science and technology.

12.   Experts on the roster are nominated by Parties, taking into account the need for a multidisciplinary approach, an appropriate gender balance and broad and equitable geographical representation. Nominees must have relevant expertise (knowledge, skills and experience) to provide advice on combating

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        3/   The UNCCD Roster of Experts can be accessed at: http://www.unccd.int/science/menu.php?newch=l2

advice on combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought and implementation of the Convention in general. The experts nominated by Parties are *ipso facto* included on the roster. Parties can make new nominations or withdraw previous nominations to the roster at any time and notify the Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for maintaining the roster, making it publicly available for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information and preparing reports on its status, with respect to the thematic coverage, regional and gender balance on the roster.

UNFCCC Roster of Experts 4/

13.   The UNFCCC Roster of Experts was established in 1996 to facilitate the work of the Convention Secretariat. It contains information on individuals with expertise in areas such as greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, projections of GHG emissions, evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness and effects of specific policies and measures and methods for assessing climate change impacts, adaptation strategies and technologies. Experts from the roster may be called upon to assist the Secretariat in fulfilling specific tasks relating to technological and methodological issues as requested by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI). Assignments could include preparation and review of reports, contribution of written materials for reports, participation in technical workshops and expert meetings and the provision of expert advice on specific issues.

14.   Experts are nominated by National Focal Points of respective Parties. Each Party can nominate up to 10 candidates to the roster using a common nomination form. The form identifies the specific areas of expertise of the nominated experts. Each nomination must be accompanied by the CV of the nominee and without it the expert cannot be listed on the roster. Experts serve in their personal capacity and may come from the public or private sector, including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The nominees must possess relevant scientific and technical expertise in the specified fields. They should also have relevant academic or professional qualifications and at least five years of experience. Furthermore, the experts need to be knowledgeable about specific regions or countries, about related climate change issues and activities in those countries or regions. It is also desirable that the experts should have published reports and papers in the pertinent subject area and participated in relevant regional or international scientific and technical committees.

The Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) Roster of Experts 5/

15.   The GHS Roster of Experts is a database of individuals with expertise related to the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. It was developed in 2004 by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Experts from the roster are available to provide support on training and capacity building activities in the application of GHS classification, labelling and safety data sheets in specific sectors and/or geographic regions. The inclusion of the experts in the roster is voluntary. Qualified experts who wish to be listed on the roster can express their interest directly to UNITAR. The experts serve in their personal capacity and not as official representatives of their respective countries or organizations.

FAO Food Safety Expert Roster 6/

16.   This is a database of professionals with expertise relevant to the activities of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). These include activities in the areas of chemicals

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4/   See: http://unfccc.int/parties_and_observers/roster_of_experts/items/534.php

5/   See: http://www.unitar.org/cwg/ghs_partnership/expertroster.htm

6/   See: http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/roster/);

in foods, microbial hazards in foods, biotechnology and other specific food safety issues. The purpose of the roster is to facilitate access to a wide range of experts and scientists, streamline the expert selection process and provide timely feedback to those interested in participating in activities related to the provision of scientific advice to the Codex Alimentarius and to member countries. Experts from the roster are selected to undertake specific assignments, serve on specific technical committees or participate in specialized expert consultations.

17.   "Calls for Experts" are issued periodically when FAO requires expertise to address a specific food safety issue. Subsequently, any interested person with the required expertise can submit his/her application online using the Roster Application Form (RAF). All mandatory sections of the form must be completed. The system does not allow an applicant to submit his/her application unless all the mandatory fields are completed. After submitting the form, the applicant has the option to upload a detailed CV.

18.   After the application deadline, a selection panel reviews all the applications against the criteria specified in the "Call for Experts". In addition to the scientific credentials and experience of the various candidates the final selection also takes into account other factors, such as balance of the scientific expertise as well as gender and regional balance. The selected experts are maintained on the roster for a period of four years. Within that period, they can submit new information to update their profiles.

UNDP-wide Integrated Expert Rosters of Consultants 7/

19.   The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU/SSC) has developed an online Web-enabled system, known as Web of Information for Development (WIDE). The purpose of the WIDE is to assist in gathering and facilitating easy access to information on institutions, expertise, technologies and practices between countries of the South for development initiatives. One way of achieving this is through the establishment and the maintenance of rosters of experts. The rosters contain information on professionals with substantial knowledge and expertise within UNDP's areas of support, who are willing to be considered for long and short-term assignments. SSC focal points and the Sub-Regional Resource Facilities (SURFs) use the WIDE platform to build their rosters of experts and make their local experts visible and accessible to a broader audience through the UNDP-wide Integrated Expert Rosters. A number of UNDP Regional and Sub-Regional Expert Rosters have been established. These include the Bratislava Regional Centre Expert Roster, 8/ the Sub-Regional Resource Facility for Arab States (SURF-AS), 9/ the Regional Centre in Bangkok's Expert Roster, 10/ and the East Asia Regional Learning Center Expert Roster.

20.   The experts in the above-mentioned rosters are selected through the following process. First, the UNDP country and regional office staff systematically contact leading think tanks, research institutions, universities and consulting firms and identify individuals with expertise in the topics of relevance to UNDP and solicit their CVs. The UNDP country or regional offices then submit the CVs of the experts found to be of the highest quality to the relevant SURF for inclusion in the regional roster. Before being included in the roster, the regional centre checks the references provided in the CVs.

21.   Different offices have set up their own mechanism for screening new consultants. One of the mechanisms involves seeking references for each expert and making the written recommendations part of the expert's profile. Some offices have set up screening panels to evaluate the consultants' CVs and assess their qualifications. Other offices undertake a pre-screening of the candidates before inviting them to join

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7/   Further details about the UNDP-WIDE can be accessed at: http://tcdc.undp.org/sie/aboutWIDE.asp and http://tcdc.undp.org/sie/expertRosters.asp

8/   See details at: http://europeandcis.undp.org/?menu=p_admin&section=roster

9/   See: http://www.surf-as.org/FocusAreas/KM/Tools/GlobalExpertRoster.htm

10/   See: http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/ourwork/expertroster.html

to join the roster. Once a job assignment is successfully completed, the consultant is made an active member of the roster. The evaluation reports for the completed assignments form part of expert's profile. Experts are removed from the roster if their performance is not satisfactory.

WHO Roster of Experts in Biological Sciences 11/

22.   This roster consists of scientific experts in biological sciences who submit applications in response to a "Call for Experts". The applications are reviewed by an outside referee and by the Secretariat on the basis of the criteria outlined in the "Call for Experts". Experts from the roster are selected to serve on the Expert Panel on Food Safety. Experts are placed on the roster for an initial period of four years or until their terms on the Expert Panel on Food Safety expire. After their term, experts may apply again when new "Calls for Experts" are issued.

III.   THE STATUS AND KEY FEATURES OF THE ROSTER OF BIOSAFETY EXPERTS

23.   The Roster of Biosafety Experts is a database of qualified experts whom Parties and other Governments can call upon or employ to assist them in undertaking specific tasks related to the implementation of the Protocol. It was established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in its decision EM-I/3. Its role is to "provide advice and other support, as appropriate and upon request, to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, to conduct risk assessment, make informed decisions, develop national human resources and promote institutional strengthening, associated with the transboundary movements of living modified organisms".

24.   The roster was operationalised by the CBD Secretariat in 2001. Currently, it contains 640 experts nominated by 77 governments. It includes experts in the following fields: risk assessment and risk management (462 or 72%), legislation and regulation (219 or 34%), institutional development (217 or 33%), teaching and training (193 or 30%), research and development (160 or 25%), social and economic sciences (139 or 22%) and data management and information sharing (85 or 13%).

25.   In its decision BS-I/4, the COP-MOP adopted interim guidelines for the roster, which among other things describe its mandate, its nature and composition, the procedure and mechanism for nomination of members to the roster and the scope of areas of expertise required. The interim guidelines also outline the procedure for selection of the roster experts for assignments, the mechanisms for payment of experts for the completed assignments and the mechanism for evaluating the quality of the assignments undertaken by the roster experts. 12/

26.   The following are some of the main features of the roster:

         (a)   *Role:* To provide advice and other support, as appropriate and upon request, to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, to conduct risk assessment, make informed decisions, develop national human resources and strengthen institutional capacities associated with LMOs;

         (b)   *Nomination of experts*: Experts are nominated by governments. Each government can nominate up to 50 candidates and not more than five experts per area of specialization. Experts interested in being listed on the roster have to apply through their respective governments. The experts are required to complete a common nomination form, which was adopted by COP-MOP in decision BS-1/4, annex I,

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11/   See: http://www.who.int/ipcs/food/jmpr/expert_calls/en/).

12/   A copy of the full decision can accessed at: http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/cop-mop/result.aspx?id=8286

appendix 1. Nominations can be not time-bound or task-oriented, as in the case of the STAP and the FAO Food Safety Expert Roster where "Calls for Experts" are issued when expertise is required to address a specific issue/ task;

(c)   *Selection of experts*: The experts nominated by governments are *ipso facto* included in the roster. Currently, there is no independent review/ screening process at the international level. Governments are responsible for ensuring that nominees possess the highest professional qualities and expertise in the fields for which they are nominated.

(d)   *Selection criteria*: Currently, there are no clear-cut criteria (including minimum qualifications, experience and level of expertise) for determining who qualifies to be nominated as an expert to the roster. 13/ The interim guidelines for the roster only specify (in the nomination form) the areas of expertise required and the other basic information about the expert including his/her biodata, education, employment history, professional affiliations, publications and skills set (including language). They do not identify any specific criteria for nomination;

(e)   *Duration of listing of experts on the roster*: Membership on the roster is currently open-ended. There is no explicit time limit for which a nominated expert can remain listed on the roster. The interim guidelines encourage governments to keep their nominations up-to-date and to use their national reports to confirm their nominations and, if necessary, update information of individual experts;

(f)   *Evaluation of the experts' work*: As in the case of the STAP expert roster, the interim guidelines for the biosafety roster provide a mechanism for evaluating the level and quality of advice or other support provided by experts for each specific assignment. Such evaluation reports must be made publicly available through the BCH. However, the guidelines do not state explicitly how the experts whose performance is not satisfactory should be handled. In the case of the STAP and the UNDP expert rosters, the experts who satisfactorily complete their assessments are maintained as active members of the roster for future assignments. Experts whose performance is not satisfactory are automatically removed from the roster.

27.   In the submissions received by the Secretariat, some governments expressed the need to review and reach a clearer and more harmonized consensus on the basic features of the roster prior to discussing the criteria and minimum requirements for the experts and the quality control mechanism. Some of the issues raised include the following:

(a)   Nature and composition of the roster (e.g. a need for common understanding on what constitutes an international expert in biosafety in order to be listed on the roster);

(b)   The role/purpose of the roster in contributing to the implementation of the Protocol and to the building of capacities;

(c)   The means needed for the roster to fulfil its role; and

(d)   The expectations, needs and objectives for experts nominated to the roster.

28.   With regard to the role of the roster, some submissions noted that it plays a dual role as follows:

(a)   As a mechanism for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to access international expertise to assist them in building their capacity to implement the Protocol. In this

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13/   Expertise can be described as a combination of academic credentials, experience and practical knowledge and skills.

regard, the roster provides a pool of technical experts that can assist those countries in making timely science-based decisions, in conducting appropriate risk assessments, in developing national human resources and in promoting institutional strengthening for longer-term independence.

(b)   As a mechanism for providing national experts opportunities to gain international experience, exposure and recognition.

29.   In addition to the above-mentioned issues, which were specifically raised in the submissions received, the Liaison Group may also wish to consider and make recommendations on the following related issues, taking into account the experience of the expert rosters of other organizations:

(a)   Nomination/selection   process   (e.g.   government-nomination   vs.   open invitation/applications to be listed on the roster);

(b)   Details of information on the experts to be kept in the roster, including the need to provide detailed CVs in addition to the information provided on the nomination form checklists; and

(c)   Time frame for listing experts on the roster. Currently, there is no explicit limit regarding how long an expert can remain listed on the roster.

IV.   VIEWS AND SUGGESSIONS ON THE CRITERIA AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR LISTING EXPERTS ON ROSTER

30.   In its decision BS-III/4, paragraph 1, COP-MOP requested the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building for Biosafety to develop, on the basis of submissions from governments and organizations, draft criteria and minimum requirements (including minimum qualifications or experience) for experts to be listed on the roster. These are meant to assist countries in making their nominations to the roster and in re-assessing their earlier nominations.

31.   The above decision was inspired by the findings in the report on the Roster of Biosafety Experts (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/ADD2) which the Executive Secretary prepared for COP-MOP 3, based on submissions from Governments and relevant organizations. The report identified the limited quality and inadequacy of information regarding the qualifications, experience and competences of the experts on the roster as some of the main factors limiting its effective use[14]. The report observed that the information available is not sufficient to enable potential users to assess the expertise of most experts on the roster. Furthermore it was noted that that the categories of expertise are too general. Finally, it was observed that there are no clear criteria for determining who should be considered an expert in biosafety.

32.   Most of the submissions received reiterated the need to establish clear criteria and minimum requirements for nominating and selecting experts to the roster. However some submissions recommended that the elaboration of these should be done after addressing the basic issues regarding the nature and role of the roster, as discussed in the preceding section.

33.   One submission recommended that two separate criteria should be established for the following categories of experts:

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[14]   The report (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/Add.2) is accessible at: http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-03. The document is also made available as an information document for this meeting.

(a)   National experts, i.e. those with extensive experience at the national level, whose expertise would be useful for implementing specific national-level activities that may be unique to individual countries.

(b)   Internationally recognised experts who would provide services in the context of international response to capacity development in biosafety. It was noted that there are areas in which expertise should be internationally recognized in order to be of value for capacity building, e.g. international law and regulatory development. To be recognised as an international expert it was recommended that one should meet the following minimum requirements:

(i)   Participation in relevant international scientific and technical committees, expert panels or advisory bodies;

(ii)   Presentations at international meetings/ scientific or technical fora; and

(iii)   Publication of articles in internationally recognised journals.

34.   Some of the general suggestions made with regard to the criteria for nomination to the roster include the following:

(a)   Evidence of in-depth knowledge of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

(b)   Relevant academic and professional qualifications (e.g. a higher degree, Ph.D. or equivalent), for example in the following fields:

(i)   Risk assessment and risk management

(ii)   Skills in biology, ecology, genetics and taxonomy and a good knowledge on, and experience in, biosafety.

(iii)   Knowledge of LMOs (e.g. breeding and genetics, plant physiology, etc.) and how the ecosystem is potentially affected by the use of LMOs (e.g. conservation biology, weed science, risk assessment, risk regulation, etc.)

(c)   Knowledge of sector(s) that fall under the Protocol.

(d)   Documented national or international experience in the relevant area of expertise (e.g. participation in policy, regulatory and institutional development)

(e)   Documented evidence of research in the field (e.g. pear-reviewed publications).

(f)   References from internationally recognized experts in the field of biosafety.

(g)   Professional experience of at least 5 or 10 consecutive years in a given field. One submission suggested that in the nomination forms, experts should be required to indicate how their experience and expertise relates to the relevant areas of capacity building, rather than simply ticking off the checklist of areas of expertise listed in the nomination form.

(h)   International experience and exposure, including participation in relevant scientific and technical committees (governmental or non-governmental) at regional and international levels.

(i)   Professional references - each expert should provide a list of references that can vouch for his/her experience. This would ensure that the expert has a proven track record of experience in the stated area of speciality.

(j)   Publications - experts should also be required to provide at least three of their most important and relevant publications in the specified field of expertise. If possible, links to those publications should be provided on the expert's record on the roster.

35.   A number of submissions also recommended that the experts nominated to the roster should have the following requirements:

(a)   Ability to give advice to Parties regarding the implementation of different provisions of the Protocol, in particular Article 15 (and Annex III) on risk assessment and Article 16 on risk management.

(b)   Working experience with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety of at least 5 years, either at the national or international level.

(c)   Prior participation in at least two of international workshops and meetings involving with biosafety issues and/or experience in serving on international panels or advisory bodies.

(d)   Previous presentations, lectures or posters at relevant meetings.

(e)   Publication of books or articles in internationally recognised journals on biosafety issues.

(f)   Experience with academic teaching and research on biosafety-related issues at national and international levels.

36.   Currently, the required information for each nominated expert is set out in the nomination form that was adopted at the first COP-MOP meeting (decision BS-I/4, Annex 1, Appendix 1). The areas of expert advice and support that may be provided through the roster are set out in the indicative list, contained in appendix 2 to the interim guidelines. A number of submissions called for the review and revision of the current nomination form for the roster. It was suggested that Parties should be requested to agree to a revised nomination form that includes additional information. The Liaison Group is invited to review and refine the draft revised nomination form contained in the Annex to this document.

V.   VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS ON A POSSIBLE QUALITY CONTROL MECHANISM FOR THE ROSTER

37.   In its decision BS-III/4, paragraph 2, COP-MOP requested the Liaison Group to explore the possibility of establishing a quality control mechanism for the roster and, if feasible, propose modalities of such a mechanism for consideration at the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, taking into account the suggestions made during the internal review of the roster.

38.   In their responses to the request made by COP-MOP in paragraph 3 of Decision BS-III/4, many governments and organizations underscored the importance of a quality control mechanism for the roster. It was noted that such a mechanism would enhance the utilization and acceptability of the experts on the roster and ensure that resources are invested in individuals with the required knowledge and demonstrated expertise to be able to effectively assist countries in addressing their needs. In the report on the Roster of Biosafety Experts which was prepared by the Executive Secretary for COP-MOP 3 ((UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/ADD2), it was observed that such a system would also help to ensure that countries using the roster do not have to bear the burden of sorting through the list to determine which experts truly have the required expertise.

39.   Some submissions noted that the primary responsibility for quality control lies with the national authorities and that such responsibility should be exercised in approving nominations to the roster of

experts. The interim guidelines for the roster state that governments are responsible for ensuring that their nominees possess the highest professional qualities and expertise in the fields for which they are nominated. In paragraph 5 of decision BS-III/4, COP-MOP further urged Parties and other governments to be more rigorous in their process of selecting and screening experts for nomination to the roster.

40.   Most of the submissions supported the idea of establishing a quality control mechanism. One submission recommended that such a mechanism should include an objective assessment of the expertise and the experience indicated in a nomination. Another recommended the mechanism should ensure that the individuals on the roster meet the proposed criteria and minimum requirements.

41.   A number of possible measures for promoting the quality of the roster were proposed. One submission recommended that the process of developing a quality control system should include the following elements:

(a)   Revision of the nomination forms to include sufficient information which would assist users in sorting through the list to determine experts that truly have the required expertise.

(b)   Creation of a screening mechanism for the nomination forms. Under such a mechanism, the Secretariat would check to ensure that that nomination forms are completed in their entirety. In cases where forms are not completely filled out, the nomination would not be posted.

(c)   Creation of a panel of experts to review nominations to verify that the nominated experts have the appropriate expertise stated on their nomination forms.

(d)   Development of a measure of accountability to evaluate the utility of consultations in terms of whether the requested support was provided.

Modalities for a quality control mechanism for the roster

42.   The quality control for the roster can, and should, take place at various levels, including the following:

(a)   At the level of the experts themselves when filling out the nomination form (self-censorship);

(b)   At the level of the nominating government (i.e. national-level pre-screening and selection);

(c)   At the Secretariat level (i.e. checking nomination forms for completeness); and/or

(d)   At the international level (e.g. by an independent expert review panel or a regionally-balanced review panel.

Self-censorship by the nominated experts

43.   When nominated by the governments, the experts should undertake a self-evaluation to determine if their level of expertise is sufficient and at par with that of other similar experts already in the roster. And when filling out the nomination forms, the experts should certify that the information provided on the form is true, complete and correct to the best of their knowledge.

Screening by the nominating Government

44.   The nominating government should:

(a)   Ensure that nominees possess the highest professional standard and expertise in the fields in which the experts are being nominated.

(b)   Ensure that the nomination form is duly completed and that the information provided accurately reflects the true situation.

Review of the nomination forms by the Secretariat

45.   The Secretariat should:

(a)   Ensure that each nomination form is fully completed before a nominee is listed on the roster.

(b)   Return incomplete forms to the nominating government or expert.

(c)   Contact the referees and invite them to provide recommendations for the nominated experts and add those recommendations to the profiles of the experts.

Screening of nominations by a panel of recognized experts or a regionally-balanced review panel

46.   An ad-hoc panel of internationally-recognized experts selected by COP-MOP or a regionally-balanced review panel nominated by governments should be established to perform the following tasks:

(a)   Critically review all the nomination forms to verify the qualifications and areas of expertise claimed, cross-check the references and make recommendations to the nominating government. The final decision for including a particular nominee on the roster would lie with the national nominating authority;

(b)   Review the evaluation reports on the each expert's performance with respect to the assignments given to him/her and make recommendations on his/her retention or removal from the roster.

47.   In order to ensure that the roster is a living entity, one submission recommended that experts should be listed on the roster for a period not exceeding two years. The continued listing on the roster of experts who are not selected for any assignment or not actively involved with biosafety issues during a two-year period should also be reviewed by the nominating governments. Furthermore, it was recommended that governments which select experts from the roster for any assignment should be required to provide a comprehensive appraisal/evaluation of the expert advice provided. Experts with good evaluation reports should be retained on the roster for at least another term of two years. After that period, their continued listing on the roster should require renewed nominations from their respective governments.

48.   One submission recommended that a measure of accountability should be developed in order to evaluate the quality and utility of the support provided by the experts selected from the roster. In this regard, the following recommendations were made:

(a)   It should be mandatory for users to provide evaluation reports, using a standardized evaluation format, of the completed assignments by the experts, including the quality of the advice and other support provided;

(b)   The results of such consultations and reviews should be made public through the BCH for review by all interested Parties;

(c)   Any experts that do not meet minimum evaluation results, based on the evaluations, should be removed from the roster.

49.   Finally, as part of the efforts to improve the quality of the roster it was recommended that meetings of experts on the roster should be organised occasionally in order to update them on new techniques, methodologies and approaches and on the developments under the Protocol. Such meetings/ technical workshops are also periodically organised by the STAP. The STAP has also produced a "Guide to the GEF for Roster Experts", which is intended educate all experts on its roster about the GEF and its operations. A similar guide should also be produced for the biosafety roster experts in to educate them about the Protocol and its processes.

VI.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

50.   The Roster of Experts on Biosafety is a vital tool for assisting developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to strengthen their capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol. From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that setting up the criteria and minimum requirements for the experts nominated to the roster and establishing an effective quality control mechanism are important measures that would enhance the effectiveness of the roster in achieving its intended purpose.

51.   Members of the Liaison Group are invited to review the issues and suggestions presented in this document and prepare recommendations for consideration by the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, which will be held May 2008 in Bonn, Germany.

Annex

DRAFT REVISED NOMINATION FORM FOR THE BIOSAFETY ROSTER OF EXPERTS[15]
Fields/sections marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

EXPERT INFORMATION

I. BRIEF PROFILE (150 words)*

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

II. BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION*

Please provide full names rather than only acronyms or initials

Title:	☐ Ms.　　☐ Mr.　　☐ Other: _____ ☐ Professor　☐ Dr.
Name:	
Employer / Organization:	
Job Title:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Facsimile:	
Email:	
Web Site:	
Year of Birth:	
Gender:	☐ Male　　☐ Female
Nationality:	
Second Nationality:	

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[15]/   The proposed new additions are highlighted as **BOLD** text. The proposed deletions are struck through.

III. DETAILS OF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT*

Start Date of Employment (year):	

| Organization Type: | ☐ Academic
☐ Government
☐ Inter-Governmental
Organization (IGO) | ☐ Industry
☐ Non-Governmental
Organization (NGO)

☐
Other:_____ |

Name of Organization and the Department/Division/Unit	
Name of Supervisor	
Main Areas of Responsibility: *(Briefly describe how your work relates to the area(s) of expertise for which you're being nominated)*	
Specific Biosafety-Related Duties **(***Briefly describe the duties/tasks performed and indicate the average % time spent on each***)**	
Main relevant accomplishments	

IV. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY*

Main Countries or Regions Worked:	

Please give details of previous employment beginning with the most recent previous employer.

Previous Employer 1	
Name, **Address and Contact Details** of the Employer / Organization:	
Name and title of Supervisor:	
Job Title:	
Duration of Time Employed:	
~~Address:~~	

Main Areas of Responsibility:
***(Briefly describe how your work
related to the area(s) of expertise
for which you're being nominated)***

Main relevant accomplishments

Previous Employer 2

Name, **Address and Contact
Details** of the Employer /
Organization:

Name and Title of Supervisor:

Job Title:

Duration of Time Employed:

~~Address:~~

Main Areas of Responsibility:
***(Briefly describe how your work
related to the area(s) of expertise
for which you're being nominated)***

Main Relevant Accomplishments

Previous Employer 3

Name, **Address and Contact
Details** of the Employer /
Organization:

Name and Title of Supervisor:

Job Title:

Duration of Time Employed:

~~Address:~~

Main Areas of Responsibility:
***(Briefly describe how your work
related to the main area of
expertise for which you're being
nominated)***

Main Relevant Accomplishments

Other Relevant Work Experience

(~~e.g.~~ **Consulting experience**)

Description of the Consultancy:
(Briefly describe how the work undertaken relates to the main area of expertise for which you're being nominated)

Responsibilities:
(Briefly describe your specific responsibilities and how they relate to the area(s) of expertise for which you're being nominated)

Main Relevant Accomplishments

Other Relevant Work Experience
(~~e.g.~~ volunteer work experience)

Description of Work Done:
(Briefly describe how your work related to the main area of expertise for which you're being nominated)

Responsibilities:
(Briefly describe how your work relates to the main area of expertise for which you're being nominated)

Main Relevant Accomplishments

V. EDUCATION

Formal Education*

Primary Degree or Other Academic Distinction and the Subject* (*e.g. BSc. in Microbiology***):**

Name of Academic Institution:

Dates (From To):

Academic Supervisor:

Second Degree or Other Academic Distinction and the Subject* (*e.g. MSc. in Microbiology*):	
Name of Academic Institution:	
Dates (From To):	
Academic Supervisor:	

Third Degree or Other Academic Distinction and the Subject* (*e.g. PhD in Microbiology*):	
Name of Academic Institution:	
Dates (From To):	
Academic Supervisor:	

Other Professional Qualifications
(List other 3 most relevant specialized training and certifications obtained)

VI.   AREAS OF EXPERTISE*

This section allows you to specify your main expertise for contribution to the roster. Areas of expertise are organized under 8 broad subheadings as follows:

1. Data Management and Information Sharing	7. Social and Economic Sciences
2. Institutional Development	8. Teaching and Training
3. Legislation and Regulation	**9. LMO Identification**
4. Public Awareness and Participation	**10. LMO Monitoring**
5. Research and Development	
6. Risk Assessment and Risk Management (including specification of organisms and traits)	

*(Please indicate only ~~the~~ **up to two** particular subjects in which you have specialized expertise)*

Data Management and Information-Sharing

☐ **Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) Node Development**
☐ Database **design**
☐ Environmental statistics
☐ Information exchange mechanisms
☐ Information technology
☐ Information clearing-house **development**
☐ **Knowledge management**
☐ Other: _____

Institutional Development

☐ Agricultural management
☐ Environmental management
☐ Human resources
☐ Infrastructure development
☐ Project ~~administration~~ development, **management & monitoring**
☐
☐ Public health
☐ Resources management
☐ Other: _____

Legislation and Regulation

☐ Access and Benefit Sharing
☐ Biosafety regulation drafting
☐ Biosafety law enforcement
☐ Intellectual property law
☐ International environmental law
☐ International trade law
☐ National environmental law
☐ National trade regulations
☐ **Liability and redress**
☐ **LMO application/dossier preparation**
☐ Other: _____

Public Awareness and Participation

☐ Campaigning and advocacy
☐ Community participation
☐ Journalism
☐ Public information / communications

Research and Development

☐ Biotechnology product development
☐ Biotechnology research
☐ Other: _____

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

- ☐ Agricultural ecology
- ☐ Agriculture
- ☐ Alien invasive species
- ☐ Analytical detection methods
- ☐ Animal ecology
- ☐ Animal pathology
- ☐ Aquaculture
- ☐ Biochemistry
- ☐ Biotechnologies
- ☐ Botany
- ☐ Entomology
- ☐ Environmental impact assessment
- ☐ Epidemiology
- ☐ Evolutionary biology
- ☐ Food sciences
- ☐ Forestry ecology
- ☐ Genetic engineering
- ☐ Genetics of natural populations

Risk Assessment and Risk Management (continued)

- ☐ Human biology
- ☐ Indigenous knowledge
- ☐ Marine biology/ecology
- ☐ Microbial Ecology
- ☐ Microbiology
- ☐ Molecular biology (e.g. gene isolation, sequencing etc.)
- ☐ Mycology
- ☐ Pest management
- ☐ Plant pathology
- ☐ Plant physiology
- ☐ Population biology
- ☐ Risk assessment process design and application
- ☐ Soil biology
- ☐ Taxonomy
- ☐ Toxicology
- ☐ Virology
- ☐ Zoology
- ☐ Other: _____

Skills Set:
- ☐ **Audit of risk assessment reports**
- ☐ **Development of risk management plans**
- ☐
- ☐ **Risk communication**

Organisms:
(specify organisms for which you have expertise, indicating Genus and species where possible)

Organism Traits:
(specify organism traits for which you have expertise)
- ☐ Antibiotic resistance
- ☐ Bacterial resistance
- ☐ Fungus resistance
- ☐ Herbicide tolerance

- ☐ Insect resistance
- ☐ Marker genes
- ☐ Nematode resistance
- ☐ Product quality
- ☐ Virus resistance
- ☐ Other: _____

LMO Identification
- ☐ **Customs and border control**
- ☐ **LMO detection & quantitative analysis**
- ☐ **LMO traceability skills**
- ☐ **LMO documentation expertise**
- ☐ **Unique identification system development**

LMO Monitoring
- ☐ **Confined field trials**
- ☐ **Gene flow analysis and gene ecology**
- ☐ **LMO post-release monitoring/surveillance**

Social and Economic Sciences	*Teaching and Training*
☐ Agricultural economics	☐ Environmental education
☐ Bioethics	☐ Extension work
☐ **Cost-benefits analysis of LMOs**	☐ Informal teaching (e.g., workshop facilitation)
☐ Environmental economics	☐ Other: _____
☐ Life cycle assessment	
☐ Social sciences	
☐ Socio-economic impact analysis	
☐ Sustainable development	
☐ Technology assessment	
☐ **Trade impact assessment**	
☐ Other: _____	

VII. PUBLICATIONS*

List your three most important **and relevant** publications **(in particular those related to the main field of expertise for which you're being nominated**):	1. 2. 3.
List other publications (please list complete citations of all peer-reviewed articles, books, book chapters, conference papers and other publications; you may send a file if the list is long)):	

VIII. AWARDS AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

List up to 3 most relevant scientific/ **professional** awards received:	
List relevant professional societies or organizations in which you have membership, including honorary memberships (e.*g. Member or Chairperson of the International Society for Biosafety Research (ISBR) since 2001***):**	
List relevant technical committees, expert panels or advisory bodies on which you have served and briefly describe your specific responsibilities:	

IX. KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES*

Mother Tongue:	Arabic: ☐	English ☐	Russian ☐
	Chinese: ☐	French ☐	Spanish ☐
	Other: _____		

Other languages (Speaking)	**Arabic:** ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Chinese: ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	English ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	French ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Russian ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Spanish ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**

Reading:	**Arabic:** ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Chinese: ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	English ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	French ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Russian ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Spanish ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**

Writing:	**Arabic:** ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Chinese: ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	English ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	French ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Russian ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Spanish ☐	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**
	Other: _____	**NA/Excellent/Good/Fair/Slight**

X. REFERENCES*

Please give name and detailed contact information for key professional references

Reference 1:

Reference 2:

Reference 3:

XI. ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Please list any other information relevant to your role as an expert.

| |
| |

XII. CONFIRMATION AND AGREEMENT*

I hereby confirm that the above information is correct and agree for its inclusion in the Roster of Experts on Biosafety under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Convention on Biological Diversity. I have no objection to this information being made publicly available.

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

XIII. CONFIRMATION BY NOMINATING GOVERNMENT*

This section must be completed by a National Focal Point

Government:	
Name of Government Representative:	
Focal Point Type:	☐ Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety National Focal Point ☐ Biosafety Clearing-House National Focal Point ☐ CBD National Focal Point
Date:	
Signature:	