



**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

AFRICAN UNION STRATEGY ON BIOSAFETY

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BACKGROUND

- ◉ The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (obligations to parties)
- ◉ Different countries- different levels of NBFs, Policy & Legal frameworks (Functional Acts, Draft laws/ Policies, Drafting process)
- ◉ The OAU Model law on Safety in biotechnologies(adopted 2001)
- ◉ Need for regional coordination in Biosafety
- ◉ Need for a regional strategy on Biosafety

BACKGROUND...

- ◉ The Executive Council of the African Union resolved to take a common approach to address issues pertaining to modern biotechnology and biosafety
- ◉ The role of the AU-GTZ project (Support of the AU in the Matters of Biosafety) for Capacity building

WHY RECS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY ?

- ◉ Considered as integration Pillars by AUC
- ◉ Membership assured
- ◉ Functional Secretariats and associated structures, personnel (build capacity)
- ◉ Similar interests, closer ecological & Socio-economic environment (Biosafety on Agenda)
- ◉ Biosafety part of or associated with institutional mandates
- ◉ Cost effectiveness

AU INITIATIVES RELATED TO BIOSAFETY AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

- ◉ The AU-GTZ Biosafety Project thru the decision of the Exec. Council to initiate an Africa-wide Capacity Building in the issues of Biosafety.
 - The decision-stresses the need for Member States to equip themselves with the necessary human and institutional capacities to deal with biosafety issues within the framework of the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- ◉ AU-NEPAD High Level Panel Report on Modern Biotechnology: « Freedom to Innovate »-encourages the safe application of biotechnology, systematically focusing on the five regions of Africa towards applying various fields of biotechnology on the priority needs of these regions.
- ◉ Africa's Consolidated Plan Action on Science and Technology 2007-2014 and now the STISA 2014-2024 (AUC-DHRST)

THE AU BIOSAFETY STRATEGY PILLARS

1. Establishment and strengthening of institutional frameworks
2. Awareness raising and biosafety information exchange
3. Capacity building and preparedness for negotiations
4. Policy and legal Frameworks
5. International cooperation
6. Sustainability mechanism

THE AU BIOSAFETY STRATEGY

ROLE OF AUC

- ◉ Spearhead and coordinate communication with RECs and National Focal Points
- ◉ Create a Biosafety Unit within the premanent structure of the AUC
- ◉ Coordinate and harmonize capacity building initiatives (standards, harmony, synergy)
- ◉ Organize preparatory meetings prior to major multilateral negotiations of relevance to biosafety

THE AU BIOSAFETY STRATEGY

ROLE OF THE RECS

- ◉ Information dissemination and exchange
- ◉ Sub-regional preparatory meetings to harmonize sub-regional interests
- ◉ Set standards, guidelines and requirements
- ◉ Identify sub-regional priorities for capacity- building and enhance sub-regional cooperation
- ◉ Mobilize their members to fulfill regional or international obligations
- ◉ Support sub-regional centres of excellence

THE AU BIOSAFETY STRATEGY

ROLE OF MEMBER COUNTRIES

- ◉ Formulate conducive policies and laws
- ◉ Put in place and support the relevant personnel and institutional framework for Biosafety decision making and monitoring of GMOs
- ◉ Motivate national scientists in biotech and biosafety
- ◉ Identify and prioritize capacity needs
- ◉ Forge public-private partnerships
- ◉ Engage public in biosafety decision making

THE AU BIOSAFETY STRATEGY

ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- ◉ Supporting the strategy especially provision of start-up funds
- ◉ Provision of equipments for biotech labs and GMO testing centers
- ◉ Capacity building (training of trainers)
- ◉ Information exchange/transfer of technologies on status of the science

MAKING THE STRATEGY WORK

- ◉ Creation of a Biosafety co-ordination secretariat at the AUC (AU-DHRST);
- ◉ Promotion of biosafety through the existing RECs- putting biosafety on the agenda;
- ◉ Holding of regional preparatory meetings, prior to international engagements;
- ◉ Promotion of the Revised African Model Law on Biosafety among Member States-towards a harmonized legal system;
- ◉ Provision of regional tools on biosafety for use of NFPs/CNA etc.
- ◉ South to South Cooperation/exchange of expertise
- ◉ Raising funds for the strategy (internally &

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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