Secretariat of the
Convention on Biological Diversity

Ref.: SCBD/BS/MPDM/ABw/65409 23 October 2008

N O T I F I C A T I O N

Submission of views and/or information in preparation for the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Madam/Sir,

At its fourth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP), in its decision BS-IV/11, *invited* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit to the Executive Secretary information relevant to the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management[1], particularly on existing guidance documents on risk assessment.

These submissions will serve as one of the inputs for the deliberations of the AHTEG during its first meeting which is tentatively scheduled to take place in April 2009. I would greatly appreciate it if these submissions could be sent to the Secretariat as soon as possible, but no later than **Tuesday, 20 January 2009.**

Further details regarding the meetings of the AHTEG will be made available in due course.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your continued cooperation and support towards the work of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaf
Executive Secretary

Attachment

[1] The terms of reference of the AHTEG are annexed hereto for ease of reference.

To: National Focal Points of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
Other governments, and relevant international organizations

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Annex

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE

AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

1. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall:

(a) Include experts selected on the basis of their expertise on the issues relevant for the mandate of the Group, based on a standardized common format for submission of CVs from experts nominated by Parties, respecting geographical representation, in accordance with the consolidated *modus operandi* of the SBSTTA of the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision VIII/10 of the Conference of the Parties, annex III);

(b) Include observers in accordance with the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;

(c) Meet twice, pending availability of funds, with an interval of not less than ten months between meetings and prior to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, and perform necessary tasks between the two meetings to achieve the proposed outcomes outlined herein;

(d) During the first meeting, the Group shall:

(i) Develop a "roadmap", such as a flowchart, on the necessary steps to conduct a risk assessment in accordance with Annex III to the Protocol and, for each of these steps, provide examples of relevant guidance documents;

(ii) Taking into consideration the identified need for further guidance on specific aspects of risk assessment, including particular types of (i) living modified organisms (for example, fish, invertebrates, trees, pharmaplants and algae); (ii) introduced traits; and (iii) receiving environments, as well as monitoring of the long-term effects of living modified organisms released in the environment, prioritize the need for further guidance on specific aspects of risk assessment and define which such aspects should be addressed first, taking also into account the need for and relevance of such guidance, and availability of scientific information;

(iii) Define an action plan to produce, prior to the second meeting of the Group, modalities for development of the guidance documents on the specific aspects that were identified as priorities and for testing of the roadmap. This action plan should include the details of a process for monitoring and reviewing the progress in each of the specific aspects;

(iv) Prepare a progress report containing a detailed summary of the terms and procedures for reviewing the modalities for the development of guidance documents to be followed prior to the second meeting of the Group;

(e) During the second meeting, the Group shall:

(i) Revise and finalize the "roadmap" for the effective use of guidance documents on risk assessment;

(ii) Make recommendations to the Secretariat on how to integrate the "roadmap" and tools for retrieval of guidance materials available in the Biosafety Information Resources Centre of the Biosafety Clearing-House that are relevant at the different stages of risk assessment;

(iii) Review the action plan referred to in subparagraph 1 (d) (iii) of this annex on specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management developed in accordance with the terms and procedures established in the first meeting of the Group;

(iv) Consider possible modalities for cooperation in identifying living modified organisms or specific traits that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health;

(v) Prepare a report for consideration by the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;

2. The deliberations of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group shall be based primarily on:

(a) Submissions received in accordance with paragraph 5 of this decision;

(b) The reports of the regional and sub-regional workshops on capacity-building and exchange of experiences on risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/INF/14-17) and the report of the Canada-Norway Workshop on Risk Assessment for Emerging Applications of Living Modified Organisms (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/INF/13);

(c) Contribution received through the open-ended online forum, ad hoc discussion groups and real-time online regional conferences;

(d) Guidance materials available in the Biosafety Information Resource Centre of the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(e) Any other relevant materials made available by the Secretariat.
