

Issue Brief¹

Issue Title	Inequity in the participation of developing countries in the context of synthetic biology
Description	<p>Developed countries represent the leaders in the research and development in the field of synthetic biology. However, the participation of developing countries in both the research and development in synthetic biology could be important for achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly for the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Despite this, developing countries currently face challenges in their ability to research, access and use the technology, thus resulting in inequitable participation.</p>
Timeline (<5 years, 5-10 years, >10 years) to realisation	<p>Current and ongoing.</p>
Potential impacts on the objectives of the Convention	<p>Equitable participation could lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved implementation of Articles 16, 17, 18 and 19 of the Convention on Biological Diversity • Positive contributions to Targets 17 and 20 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework <p>Unequitable participation could result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploitation of genetic resources without benefits-sharing
Other considerations	<p>Equitable participation could lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution towards Sustainable Development Goals (e.g., achievement of Target 20 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework could contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 17) • Creation of bio-economies and shift from petroleum-based economic activities • Creation of additional socioeconomic value from resources

¹ Information gathered from the members of the multidisciplinary Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology. Descriptions complemented with publications published by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Inequitable participation could result in:

- Developing countries could remain primarily as exporters of raw materials, which could cause a reliance on resource extraction and thus pressure conservation

Efforts aimed at enhancing the involvement of developing countries in the field of synthetic biology should also account for specific social and cultural contexts. In addition, governmental prioritization, resource allocation and enabling policies would be needed to allow for effective participation in the research and development in the field of synthetic biology. This trend and topic is related to the discussions on capacity-building, technology transfer and knowledge sharing pursuant to decision 15/31.