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SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISMS FOR THE MEMBER STATES OF THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

Riyadh, 14-18 April 2019

**Annotated provisional agenda**

# Introduction

## A. Background

1. In its decisions [X/15](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-10/cop-10-dec-15-en.pdf), [XI/2](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-11/cop-11-dec-02-en.pdf), [XII/2 B](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-12/cop-12-dec-02-en.pdf), [XIII/23](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-23-en.pdf), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity encouraged Parties to continue to take the necessary steps to establish, strengthen, and ensure the sustainability of national clearing‑house mechanisms to provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).
2. Most recently, in decision [14/25](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-25-en.pdf), the Conference of the Parties invited Parties and other Governments that do not have national clearing-house mechanisms and those wishing to redesign existing ones to use the Bioland tool developed by the Executive Secretary. It also invited Governments and relevant organizations, as appropriate, to continue providing the necessary financial, technical and human resources to support the further development of national clearing-house mechanisms, or migration of existing national clearing-house mechanism websites to the Bioland tool. Furthermore, the Executive Secretary was requested to continue to support the efforts of Parties to establish, sustain and further develop their national clearing‑house mechanisms, including through ongoing development and promotion of the Bioland tool and by facilitating and organizing training, in collaboration with Parties and relevant organizations, to assist Parties in developing or strengthen their national clearing-house mechanisms.
3. Pursuant to the above decisions and at the request of the Government of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Wildlife Authority), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is organizing a subregional training workshop on national clearing-house mechanisms for the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council, to be held in Riyadh, from 14 to 18 April 2019. The workshop will be held in English.

## B. Purpose and objectives

1. The overall objective of the workshop is to strengthen the capacity of participating countries to establish and sustain effective national clearing‑house mechanisms in support of their NBSAPs. The specific objectives are:
   1. To introduce participants to the nature and scope of national clearing-house mechanisms and their role of in supporting the implementation of NBSAPs;
   2. To provide guidance on how to develop and sustain national clearing-house mechanisms to deliver effective information services and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation and communication for the effective implementation of the Convention and its Protocols;
   3. To provide hands-on training on how to use the Bioland tool to establish a national clearing‑house mechanism website or improve an existing one and facilitate links to or interoperability with the central clearing-house mechanism, the Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) Clearing-House and the Biosafety Clearing-House;
   4. To assist participating countries in developing road maps for the establishment or further development of their national clearing‑house mechanisms.
2. By the end of the workshop, participants would be expected to be able to:
3. Describe the major elements of a national clearing-house mechanism;
4. Articulate the role of a national clearing-house mechanism in supporting the implementation of the NBSAP;
5. Describe how a national clearing-house mechanism website can support and facilitate the work of the national clearing-house mechanism;
6. Outline the technical and substantive features and functionality of the Bioland tool and describe how the tool can be used to establish and maintain a national clearing-house mechanism website and facilitate linkages with the ABS Clearing-House and the Biosafety Clearing-House;
7. Present a sound road map for the establishment or further development of their national clearing‑house mechanism, including development of a website for national clearing‑house mechanism using the Bioland tool.
8. The proposed organization of work is contained in the annex to the present document. The workshop documents will be made available on the CBD website at <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/CHMWS-2019-01>.

# Item 1. Opening of the workshop

1. The meeting will be opened by representatives of the Government of Saudi Arabia.

# Item 2. Objectives and programme of the workshop

1. The Secretariat of the Convention will give an overview of the objectives, the programme and the expected outcomes of each workshop. Participants will be invited to briefly express their expectations.

# Item 3. The role of a Clearing-House Mechanism and National clearing-house mechanisms

1. Under this item, the participants will be provided with guidance for the development of their national clearing-house mechanisms. This item will start with a presentation by the CBD Secretariat, followed by a discussion to exchange views and collect feedback.
2. The focus will be on the following learning objectives of particular relevance to the development of effective national clearing-house mechanisms:
3. *National coordination*: to understand the benefits of coordinating activities related to the development of a national clearing-house mechanism with a view to ensuring effectiveness and sustainability;
4. *Strategic management of web content*: to understand the impact of content management on the effectiveness of a website, and to provide general guidelines on how to plan and manage web content strategically;
5. *Information services*: to understand the typical information services that a national clearing‑house mechanism can provide to support the NBSAP implementation process;
6. *Technical aspects*: to gain a general overview of existing technologies that are relevant to the establishment or further development of national clearing-house mechanisms;
7. Language issues related to content and translation workflows.

# Item 4. overview of the Bioland tool

1. The main purpose of this session is to introduce the participants to Bioland, a tool developed by the Secretariat with the support of the Japan Biodiversity Fund to assist Parties in the creation of their national clearing-house mechanism websites. This tool is a basic generic national clearing-house mechanism website that can be adapted and used by interested Parties. The current version of this tool can be visualized at <http://demo.chm-cbd.net>.
2. Participants will be introduced to the main features of the tool.
3. The goal of the Bioland tool is to assist Parties in overcoming the technical complexity in establishing a well-functioning national clearing-house mechanism website and to allow clearing-house mechanism focal points to focus on the substantive and content-related aspects of the work on the national clearing-house mechanism.

# Item 5. Hands-on Bioland training

1. During the hands-on training, participants will use their country-specific Bioland-based test websites and will practice populating them according to the prepared material.
2. This session will ensure that participants understand the Bioland interface and are comfortable entering information and following the workflows.
3. One-on-one consultations will be organized during the workshop to provide participants with additional time to discuss their next steps regarding the adoption and use of the Bioland tool, and to address technical issues unresolved during the workshop.

# Item 6. Population of country-specific information

1. The main purpose of this session is to discover sources of information that can be useful for their national clearing-house mechanisms and to keep populating their test sites using the information discovered. These sources may include:
   1. Information already available in the NBSAP documents;
   2. Primary biodiversity-related institutions in the country;
   3. Search techniques to discover additional resources using English and Arabic search keywords;
   4. Sources of national information relevant to the Biosafety Clearing-House and the ABS Clearing-House;
   5. Sources of news, events and projects.
2. This session will include individual research, presentation by the Secretariat as well as group discussions.
3. For each category researched, the participants will continue populating their test websites with information specific to their country.
4. At the end of the session, participants will present their work to date and will share discoveries and challenges.

# Item 7. Exploration of Partner resources

1. In this session, the Secretariat will provide an overview of global and partner resources with biodiversity information relevant to the participating countries, including issues of interoperability and Arabic support.
2. Participants will then review the resources provided and identify those most useful to their own clearing-house mechanism needs.
3. The most useful resources will then be added to the training sites.
4. The session will conclude with a group discussion on the resources that are considered most useful regionally as well as to individual countries.

# Item 8. road map for a national clearing-house mechanism website

1. Under this item, each participant will draft a road map for establishment or further development of their national clearing-house mechanism website, including actions to be taken to:
   1. Develop a Bioland-based national clearing-house mechanism website;
   2. Populate website with content;
   3. Identify and apply best practices to keep the national clearing-house mechanism website up-to-date and active;
   4. Address non-technical aspects related to the website ownership.
2. During the preparation of the road maps, the secretariat will also provide opportunities for one on one consultations to discuss their next steps in Bioland tool adoption, and to answer technical issues unresolved during the workshop.

# Item 9. Pending matters

1. This session will be reserved for discussion of any pending matters arising from previous work and discussions.

# Item 10. Synthesis and report of the workshop

1. The purpose of this item is to recap what has been achieved during the workshop and to identify the items that will require follow-up. The participants will briefly present the final summary of their work, which is expected to include their road map for developing their national clearing‑house mechanisms. The structure and content of the final report will be discussed.
2. Prior to the closure of the meeting, participants will be invited to complete a feedback form. Any feedback provided will be used to improve the planning and organization of subsequent workshops.

# Item 11. Closure of the workshop

1. The workshop is expected to close at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 April 2019, with remarks by the representatives of the Saudi Wildlife Authority and the Secretariat.

### Annex

# Proposed organization of work

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|  | **Sunday 14 April 2019** | **Monday 15 April 2019** | **Tuesday 16 April 2019** | **Wednesday 17 April 2019** | **Thursday 18 April 2019** |
| 8.30 – 9 a.m. | Participant registration |  |  |  |  |
| 9 – 10.45 a.m. | 1. Opening of the workshop  2. Objectives and programme of the workshop  3. Role of a clearing-house mechanism and national clearing-house mechanisms | 5. Hands-on Bioland training | 6. Population of country-specific information | 8. Road map for a national clearing-house mechanism website | Field trip |
| 10.45 – 11 a.m. | **TEA/COFFEE BREAK** | | | |
| 11 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. | 3. Role of a clearing-house mechanism and national clearing-house mechanisms (*cont*.) and the round table | 5. Hands-on Bioland training (*cont*.) | 6. Population of country-specific information (*cont*.) | 8. Road map for a national clearing-house mechanism website (*cont*.)  9. Pending matters |
| 12.30 p.m. – 2 p.m. | **PRAYER TIME AND LUNCH BREAK** | | | |
| 2 – 3 p.m. | 4. Overview of the Bioland tool | 6. Population of country-specific information | 7. Exploration of partner resources | 10. Synthesis and report of the workshop  11. Closure of the workshop |

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