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ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY SERVING AS THE
MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA
PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

Ninth meeting

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Item 16 of the provisional agenda*

UNINTENTIONAL TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENTS AND EMERGENCY MEASURES (ARTICLE 17) AND THE DETECTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In decision [CP-VIII/16](#), the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety invited Parties to provide information regarding their capacity and needs in the detection and identification of living modified organisms (LMOs), including a list of laboratories and their specific activities. In addition, in the same decision, the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol requested the Executive Secretary to:

(a) To continue organizing online discussions and face-to-face meetings, subject to the availability of resources, of the Network of Laboratories focusing on the detection and identification of LMOs;

(b) To continue convening, in cooperation with relevant organizations, subject to the availability of resources, regional and subregional capacity-building activities, such as online training and face-to-face workshops in the fields of sampling, detection and identification of LMOs with specific emphasis on the topics of (i) sampling at the border, including training, (ii) establishment and maintenance of quality assurance and quality control systems, (iii) interpretation of the results of living modified organism analysis reports, (iv) environmental sampling, (v) developing reference materials, (vi) validation procedures, and (vii) measurement of uncertainty;

(c) To continue working on the draft training manual on the detection and identification of LMOs, in an expeditious manner, in collaboration with the Network of Laboratories for the Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms, and to make a draft version available, in all official languages, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at its ninth meeting with a view to its possible approval before its official final publication.

2. The present document provides information on what was done in relation to the above-mentioned activities. Section II presents a synthesis of the information submitted by the Parties; section III provides an overview of the process undertaken to produce the final version of the training manual for detection and identification of LMOs; section IV presents a summary of the capacity-building activities that were undertaken; and section V outlines possible elements of a draft decision.

* CBD/CP/MOP/9/1.

II. SYNTHESIS OF INFORMATION FROM SUBMISSIONS ON CAPACITIES AND NEEDS IN DETECTION AND IDENTIFICATION

3. In response to a notification¹ issued by the Secretariat inviting Parties to submit information in response to decision CP-VIII/16, paragraph 5, a total of 32 submissions were received, from Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechia, Ethiopia, European Union, Finland, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The full content of the submissions can be found in the Biosafety Clearing-House.²

4. Among the 32 Parties who submitted information, 28 indicated that they have one or more laboratories that are able to perform LMO detection and identification. However, the level of capacity of these laboratories to undertake this task is heterogeneous, ranging from laboratories with state-of-the-art technology, trained personnel and certifications, to more modest facilities with basic capacities ranging from lateral flow strip tests for proteins to limited DNA analysis through polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

5. Two countries indicated that they do not have a detection and identification laboratory, and others indicated that their laboratories lack fully functional LMO detection capacity.

6. The submissions also provided information on existing needs in relation to detection and identification of LMOs. In this respect, some of the main needs identified through the submissions could be categorized into three groups:

(a) Need for equipment and infrastructure: Some submissions provided a full list of equipment that will be needed to enable the laboratories to undertake proper detection and identification of LMOs, while others pointed out in a more general way the need for equipment;

(b) Need for laboratory supplies and reagents: Similarly to the information on equipment and infrastructure noted above, some submissions pointed out the need for laboratory supplies to enable the institutions to conduct the tests. The need for reference materials was highlighted;

(c) Need for training and capacity-building: As per the information received, some laboratories have qualified trained personnel with the skills needed to undertake LMO detection and identification. Some responses included the number of persons with these skills, but in most of submissions the information was either not specific or was not provided. Many submissions (16) highlighted the need for training and capacity-building in general terms. Other responses provided specific information regarding the need for training in areas such as detection and identification, quantification, sampling, measurement of uncertainty, PCR analysis, and identification and quantification of stacked events, as well as of material of animal and microbial origin.

III. TRAINING MANUAL ON THE DETECTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF LMOs

7. In its decision CP-VIII/16, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol took note of the draft training manual on the detection and identification of LMOs. The manual was developed in response to the outcomes of a prior face-to-face workshop of the detection and identification laboratory network, which had requested the drafting of training material for capacity-building activities on the detection and identification on LMOs to assist countries in fulfilling their relevant obligations under the Protocol, and in achieving the outcomes of the Strategic Plan that are relevant to the detection and identification of LMOs.

8. In the same decision, the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to continue working on the draft of the training manual, in collaboration with the Network of Laboratories for the Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms, and to make a draft version available, in all official languages, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the

¹ Notification 2017-141, issued on 15 December 2017 (Ref. No.: SCBD/SPS/DC/MM/DA/87054).

² https://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_detection/submissions/2017-2018.shtml.

Cartagena Protocol at its ninth meeting with a view to its possible approval before its official final publication.

9. In light of the above, the Secretariat convened online discussions from 2 to 16 April 2018 that contributed to the review of the draft manual. A total of 46 comments were submitted through the online discussions.³ In addition, a group of experts, who were part of the Network, were invited to further review the draft manual and provided additional support to the Secretariat in the revision of each of the modules, according to their areas of expertise.

10. The resulting draft training manual is available as an addendum to the present document (CBD/CP/MOP/9/8/Add.1).

IV. CAPACITY-BUILDING ON DETECTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF LMOs

11. Funds to conduct capacity-building workshops focusing on the detection and identification of LMOs were kindly provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea as part of the Korea Biosafety Capacity-Building Initiative. Since the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol, two workshops were held, one for the Asia and Pacific region in Kuala Lumpur from 20 to 24 March 2017 and one for francophone countries in the African region in Tunis from 5 to 9 March 2018.

12. The objectives of the workshops were (a) to provide an overview of biosafety and the Cartagena Protocol as the umbrella for detection and identification activities; (b) to provide information on the role of detection and identification of LMOs, including an overview of sampling at points of entry and for environmental monitoring; (c) to provide training on laboratory methodologies used for the analysis and detection of LMOs; and (d) to share experiences and assess national needs and gaps for the effective implementation of the relevant outcomes under the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol.

13. More information regarding the workshops mentioned above, including their recommendations, can be found in information document CBD/CP/MOP/9/INF/4.

V. SUGGESTED ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT DECISION

14. Taking into account the above information, as well as details provided in information document CBD/CP/MOP/9/INF/4, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

1. *Acknowledges* that the lack of fully operational biosafety frameworks impacts the capacity of countries to implement provisions relating to the detection and identification of living modified organisms, particularly in the absence of a legal framework that mandates such activities; and *urges* Parties to establish provisions for the detection and identification of living modified organisms;

2. *Welcomes* the draft training manual on detection and identification of living modified organisms⁴ as a useful tool for building capacities in this field;

3. *Encourages* Parties to require exporters of living modified organisms to provide the appropriate reference materials to enable the laboratory work on detection and identification of such organisms for regulatory purposes;

4. *Invites* Parties, in particular those that have not yet done so, to share information regarding their capacities and needs in the detection and identification of living modified organisms, including a list of laboratories and their specific activities;

³ https://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_detection/discussions.shtml.

⁴ As contained in CBD/CP/MOP/9/8/Add.1.

5. *Encourages* Parties to make funds available for training of laboratory personnel in the field of detection and identification of living modified organisms, including through the provision of co-financing opportunities, and to continue participating in regional and subregional networks on the detection and identification of living modified organisms;

6. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to provide funds for regional projects that could support countries' actions towards detection and identification of living modified organisms, and in particular that could promote North-South and South-South sharing of experiences and lessons;

7. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to continue collaborating with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to improve the capacities of countries with regard to detection of genetically modified foods and living modified organisms;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of funds:

(a) To continue collecting information relevant to the detection and identification of living modified organisms and making it available in a user-friendly manner through the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(b) To continue facilitating discussions of the Network of Laboratories for Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms, and face-to-face meetings as appropriate;

(c) To continue efforts to build the capacity of developing countries in relation to the detection and identification of living modified organisms in the context of unintentional transboundary movements.
