



CBD



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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

Eighth meeting

Cancun, Mexico, 4-17 December 2016

Agenda item 17

**DECISION ADOPTED BY THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL  
ON BIOSAFETY**

**VIII/18. Public awareness, education and participation (Article 23)**

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

*Recalling* decisions BS-IV/17 and BS-V/13 recognizing the need for a cohesive and focused approach to public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms,

*Welcoming* the progress made since the adoption, in decision BS-V/13, of the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms,

*Taking note* of the report on the status of implementation of the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms under the Protocol,<sup>1</sup>

1. *Extends* the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation at all levels concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms until 2020 with revised priority areas/activities as identified by the Parties and contained in the annex to the present decision, with due consideration to specific regional and subregional circumstances, to enable a streamlined strategic focus and foster further commitment to advancing the implementation of the programme of work;

2. *Urges* developed country Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to provide additional support, including financial resources, to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to implement the programme of work;

3. *Urges* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to implement the programme of work and actively share their experiences and lessons learned through the Biosafety Clearing-House, and relevant national and regional clearing-houses;

<sup>1</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/8/15.

4. *Invites* Parties to participate in the biosafety theme in the Forum on National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs Forum)<sup>2</sup> in order to promote and facilitate the integration of the programme of work into national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

5. *Requests* the Global Environment Facility to provide eligible Parties with financial resources to facilitate effective implementation of the programme of work;

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

(a) To assist in the implementation of the priority areas and activities of the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms, including public participation and access to information concerning living modified organisms;

(b) To provide links to national websites and national biosafety clearing-houses on the website of the Protocol and the Convention;

(c) To continue and enhance cooperation with relevant organizations, as well as gender initiatives and other international, regional and national initiatives to further facilitate the implementation of the programme of work;

7. *Encourages* Parties to continue to enhance capacity for public awareness, education and participation, including access to information, regarding the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms, including for indigenous peoples and local communities, and to integrate training, public awareness, education and participation into national initiatives for communication, education and public awareness, initiatives for the Sustainable Development Goals, initiatives for climate change mitigation and adaptation and other environmental initiatives;

8. *Encourages* regional stakeholders and donors to play a greater role in supporting the integration of the programme of work into national initiatives to implement focal area 5 of the Framework and Action Plan for Capacity-Building for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety<sup>3</sup> in order to enhance capacity on public awareness, education and participation and Focal Area 5 of the Strategic Plan for Biosafety with a view to raising the profile of the Protocol through outreach and communication.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://nbsapforum.net/#categories/340>.

<sup>3</sup> [Decision BS-VI/3](#) of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, annex.

*Annex*

**PRIORITY ACTIVITIES/AREAS FOR THE PROGRAMME OF WORK ON PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION CONCERNING THE SAFE TRANSFER, HANDLING AND USE OF LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS**

<b>Programme element 1: Capacity-building for the promotion of public awareness, education and participation</b>			
<b>Goal: To strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of Parties to promote and facilitate public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms</b>			
<b>Priority Area 1</b>	<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Suggested actors</b>
<b>Advance legal and/or policy frameworks and mechanisms</b>	Adopt, harmonize and implement legal and/or policy frameworks and mechanisms related to Article 23 of the Protocol, in particular the NBFs and incorporating general access to information laws into biosafety procedures (e.g. the Freedom of Information laws)	Within 2 years	-Parties -Relevant organizations -SCBD
	Integrate and promote the programme of work elements into awareness and education components in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and other national initiatives to implement Focal Area 2 on capacity-building for Article 23 and 5 on outreach of the Strategic Plan for Biosafety as well as Focal Area 5 on public awareness, education and participation of the Framework and Action Plan for Capacity-Building for the effective implementation of the Protocol		
	Share and announce the availability of frameworks and mechanisms related to Article 23 in the Central Portal and national and regional Biosafety Clearing-House nodes		
	Integrate gender-perspectives in policies and frameworks related to Article 23		
	Identify a dedicated budget for the programme of work		
	Incorporate the communication plan template developed by the Secretariat and make use of draft communication plans developed in public awareness and participation workshops held by the Secretariat to ensure implementation of awareness/outreach programmes		
	Every quarter, systematically track, evaluate and proactively exchange information on the progress of the indicators in the programme of work in the Biosafety Clearing-House and with the Executive Secretary		

Priority Area 2	Sub-activities	Time frame	Suggested actors
<p align="center"><b>Build and maintain joint initiatives</b></p>	Organize joint awareness and educational activities	<p align="center">Within 2 years</p>	<p>-Parties -Relevant organizations -SCBD -Academia</p>
	Participate in international, regional and national events related to the Strategic Plan for Biosafety, the Convention on Biodiversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization to integrate the Programme of Work in other initiatives		
	Promote the ratification of the Cartagena Protocol and its Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress through joint regional and subregional cooperation		
Priority Area 3	Sub-activities	Time frame	Suggested actors
<p align="center"><b>Advance tools, resources and processes to broaden training activities</b></p>	Develop and make use of the Secretariat’s e-learning modules on access to information, public participation and upcoming public education as well as upcoming training activities	<p align="center">Within 3 years</p>	<p>-Parties (e.g. focal points, ministries) -Relevant organizations -SCBD -Media</p>
	Disseminate and make available templates and other resources		
	Facilitate training-of-trainers programmes related to Article 23, with a particular focus on women, indigenous peoples and local communities		
	Make use of relevant tools, guidelines and other related resources in developing training activities and materials		
	Nominate national biosafety education experts to facilitate biosafety education		
	Put in place a mechanisms targeted for women, indigenous peoples and local communities, and customs officials to participate in biosafety education (e.g. participating in workshops and accessing research centres)		
	Develop a media strategy (e.g. facilitating journalist training on biosafety issues)		
	Develop and exchange guidelines and other resources on a regional level related to Article 23		
<p><b>Programme element 2: Public awareness and education</b></p> <p><b>Goal: To promote broad public awareness and education of issues concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms</b></p>			
Priority Area 4	Sub-activities	Time frame	Suggested actors
<p align="center"><b>Communicate biosafety and empower a wider audience</b></p>	Set up an e-mail list serve as well as identify local areas (e.g. libraries and bulletin boards) and traditional methods to disseminate information (e.g. developing visual/graphic representation of biosafety information)	<p align="center">Within 2 years</p>	<p>-Parties (e.g. focal points, local and national</p>

	Organize awareness workshops, in particular for women and indigenous peoples and local communities		government) -SCBD -Relevant organizations
	Disseminate information to United Nations bodies and other relevant international/regional bodies		
	Facilitate the translation of information materials through partners		
	Integrate communication activities with biodiversity, environment, sustainable development and other related agendas		
	Integrate biosafety issues into youth and gender-related awareness efforts held by other relevant programmes and other initiatives		
	Participate in national awareness-activities related to biodiversity, environment and related international days		
	Make use of the awareness survey template developed by the Secretariat and seek assistance by regional organizations to conduct national surveys online and/or offline in particular also ensuring that questions are targeted to women and indigenous peoples and local communities		
	Invite media to participate in the Biosafety Media Network <sup>4</sup>		
	Develop biosafety messages		
	Enhance the networking and communication among national focal points to the Cartagena Protocol		
	Train and assign scientists and media to communicate biosafety issues		
	Facilitate a high-level dialogue including Ministries and Heads of States and Governments to increase the level of public awareness, education and participation with regards to biosafety issues		
	Nominate experts as communicators and educators		
<b>Priority Area 5</b>	<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Suggested actors</b>
<b>Strengthen biosafety education at all levels</b>	Develop tools and methods for public education on biosafety and promoting new learning methods/technologies	Within 3 years	-Parties (e.g. focal points, Ministries -Academia (e.g. school boards, committees/districts,
	Develop procedures to integrate biosafety, in a harmonized way, into education including developing relations with various stakeholders involved in public education		
	Join networks with relevant educational focal points and integrate biosafety into biodiversity and other related environmental education at all levels		

<sup>4</sup> The media network is available at [http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal\\_art23/media\\_network.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art23/media_network.shtml).

	<p>Promote exchange of programmes for scientist and public servants on a national and regional level</p> <p>Integrate work on Article 23 with CEPA and use CEPA toolkit, as appropriate, including materials in particular for youth education</p> <p>Make use of the Secretariat’s educational package, as appropriate, on biosafety for education at all levels (in particular secondary schools), informal education and research institutes</p> <p>Include youth, women and indigenous peoples and local communities in developing biosafety education at all levels</p> <p>Take a certificate by participating in the upcoming module on public education and developing procedures and practices of public education and curricula template, as appropriate, as well as training/education action plan template</p>		<p>academic institutions, researchers, scientists, principals and teachers, education inspectors, publishers of educational materials, professional organizations of teachers and/or curricula development institutions) -Relevant organizations and associations</p>
<b>Programme element 3. Public access to information</b>			
<b>Goal: To improve public access to information concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms</b>			
<b>Priority Area 6</b>	<b>Suggested activities</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Suggested actors</b>
<b>Improve tools and procedures for access to information</b>	Define the public through stakeholder analysis and appropriate actions through situation analysis, including promoting the most inclusive stakeholder participation	Within 4 years	<p>-Parties (e.g. focal points, ministers) -Media -Academia -SCBD -Relevant organizations</p>
	Establish a process to handle requests for information		
	Set up a procedure to actively notify the public of information and means of public access to the Biosafety Clearing-House		
	Facilitate workshops on access to information in particular to ensure the participation of women, indigenous peoples and local communities, and ministries, on discussions related to laws and rights		

	Make use of the summary of tools and checklist on access to information, <sup>5</sup> as appropriate		
	Regularly promoting up-to-date access to information of websites and traditional tools to a wider-audience		
	Promote access to information and best practices/awareness in particular to women and youth		
	Provide case studies in the Biosafety Clearing-House and through other means		
	Take a certificate by participating in the module on access to information and set up procedures for information upon request and active dissemination of information, including make use of the national action plan template and other resources		
	Use relevant tools and guidance materials produced by relevant organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, among others		
	Provide training of government officials and the public, including women and indigenous peoples and local communities, on the right to access to information and to incorporate related laws		
<b>Programme element 4. Public participation</b>			
<b>Goal: To promote public participation in decision-making regarding living modified organisms (best practices)</b>			
<b>Priority Area 7</b>	<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Suggested actors</b>
<b>Mobilize the public and ensure gender-equality for a wider target audience to participate in the decision-making process</b>	Define the public through stakeholder analysis and appropriate actions through situation analysis, including promoting the inclusive stakeholder participation, with particular attention to women and indigenous peoples and local communities	Within 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parties (e.g. focal points, local and national government)</li> <li>-Local and national organizations</li> <li>-Local leaders</li> <li>-Academia</li> <li>-Public</li> </ul>
	Use effective tools for public participation targeted in particular to marginalized groups and notify the public of these in a timely manner		
	Use effective mechanisms and procedures for public participation		
	Use local languages in public participation processes		
	Facilitate training on public participation, including for women and indigenous peoples and local communities		

<sup>5</sup> The checklist and the summary of tools are available at [http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal\\_art23/pa\\_main.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art23/pa_main.shtml).

<p>Enhance the incorporation of public inputs into decisions or make public criteria and reasons for limited incorporation of inputs</p>	<p>institutions</p>
<p>Enhance equal public participation in the decision-making process regarding LMOs, in particular ensuring participation of women and indigenous peoples and local communities</p>	<p>-Media</p>
<p>Take a certificate by participating in the module on public participation regarding LMOs and set in place tools, procedures and mechanism, including make use of the national action plan template and other resources</p>	
<p>Use relevant guidance materials on public participation</p>	

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