



Convention on Biological Diversity

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Thirteenth meeting
Cancun, Mexico, 4-17 December 2016
Agenda item 17

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

XIII/16. Digital sequence information on genetic resources

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting that digital sequence information¹ on genetic resources is a cross-cutting issue that may concern the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Noting rapid advances arising from research and development in biotechnology regarding the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources and therefore *recognizing* the importance of addressing this matter in the framework of the Convention in a timely manner,

Recognizing also the need for a coordinated and non-duplicative approach on this matter under the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol,

1. *Decides* to consider at its fourteenth meeting any potential implications of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the three objectives of the Convention;
2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and relevant organizations and stakeholders to submit views and relevant information to the Executive Secretary on the potential implications referred to in paragraph 1;
3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:
 - (a) Prepare a compilation and synthesis of the views and information submitted, including the information gathered from engagement with relevant ongoing processes and policy debates;
 - (b) Commission a fact-finding and scoping study, subject to the availability of financial resources, to clarify terminology and concepts and to assess the extent and the terms and conditions of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources in the context of the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol;
4. *Decides* to establish an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group and *requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of financial resources, to convene a meeting of this group in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the annex;

¹ Terminology is subject to further discussion in the study and the expert group.

5. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to consider the outcomes of the ad hoc technical expert group and to make a recommendation on the potential implications of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the three objectives of the Convention for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting;

6. *Bearing in mind* the need for a coordinated and non-duplicative approach on this matter, *invites* the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, at its second meeting, to take a decision requesting the ad hoc technical expert group to be convened in accordance with paragraph 4 above to also serve the Nagoya Protocol.

Annex

Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources

The ad hoc technical expert group shall:

(a) Consider the compilation, synthesis and the study referred to in paragraph 3(a) and (b) of the decision in order to examine any potential implications of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the three objectives of the Convention and the objective of the Nagoya Protocol and implementation to achieve these objectives;

(b) Consider the technical scope and legal and scientific implications of existing terminology related to digital sequence information on genetic resources;

(c) Identify the different types of digital sequence information on genetic resources that are relevant to the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol;

(d) Meet at least once face-to-face, subject to the availability of financial resources, prior to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and make use of online tools to facilitate its work, as appropriate;

(e) Submit its outcomes for consideration by a meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to be held prior to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
