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PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

Fourth meeting

Bonn, 12-16 May 2008

Item 17 of the provisional agenda\*

**OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON  
BIOSAFETY (2008 – 2012)**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

The Executive Secretary has the honour to circulate herewith, for the information of participants in the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the new Outreach Strategy for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2008-2012) to be implemented by the Secretariat. The purpose of the strategy is to guide the Secretariat's efforts in increasing the visibility and awareness of the Protocol, promoting sharing of information about the Protocol and engaging key stakeholders.

\* UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/1

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In order to minimize the environmental impacts of the Secretariat's processes, and to contribute to the Secretary-General's initiative for a C-Neutral UN, this document is printed in limited numbers. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

## OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (2008 – 2012)

### I. BACKGROUND

1. Since the adoption of the Protocol in January 2000, the Secretariat has undertaken a number of activities to communicate and promote public awareness and understanding of the Protocol's objectives, provisions and processes. Prior to the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP), which was held in February 2004, the Secretariat developed an Outreach Strategy for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2003-2005) to guide its efforts and foster an integrated and coordinated approach to its communication and outreach work.

2. In decision BS-I/5, paragraph 17, the Parties to the Protocol welcomed the above-mentioned outreach strategy, which was made available in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/INF/16. The Executive Secretary was requested to advance implementation of the strategy with the view to promote awareness of the Protocol and foster active participation and support of a broad range of stakeholders in the implementation of the Protocol.

3. At their second meeting held in 2005, the Parties to the Protocol, in decision BS-II/13, paragraph 12, further requested the Executive Secretary to continue promoting public awareness and education concerning the Protocol, *inter alia* through the Protocol website, the Outreach Strategy for the Protocol and other activities.

4. The Secretariat has initiated various activities to implement the outreach strategy. For example, it has expanded the Biosafety Protocol website and improved its user-friendliness to facilitate easy access to information on the Protocol and its activities. It has also produced and disseminated several biosafety publications (including brochures, booklets and the Biosafety Protocol News magazine). The Secretariat has also organized or participated in different workshops, conferences and side events through which it has promoted awareness of the Protocol. Furthermore, contacts and partnerships have been established with different organizations and the media involved in promoting awareness of the Protocol. A database for those organizations and journalists, including their contact information and summaries of their activities, has been developed. In addition, a number of press releases and other press materials have been issued and various articles on the Protocol prepared by the Secretariat staff have been published in newsletters, journals and newspapers.

5. Overall, good progress has been made in implementing the outreach strategy. However, there is a need for improvements in some areas. For example there is a need to engage the media more proactively and effectively. There is also a need to broaden the partnerships and encourage more organizations to engage in biosafety outreach activities. Furthermore, there is a need to more proactively engage the academic and scientific community to enhance biosafety education activities. It is also important to target other strategic audiences including media, the private sector, customs officials, farmer organizations as well as regional and international development organizations and networks.

6. The present revised outreach strategy for the Protocol (2008-2012) seeks to build on the previous experiences and achievements by the Secretariat to promote a more proactive, focussed and synchronized approach to communication and outreach for the Protocol. It is designed to enable the Secretariat to further streamline and optimize the use of existing communication tools and mechanisms and foster strategic engagement of key target audiences to promote their awareness and active participation in the implementation of the Protocol.

7. This document outlines the purpose and objectives of the strategy, the guiding principles, the target audiences, the communications and outreach tools and strategies to be used, the monitoring and evaluation framework, the implementation action plan, and the resources required to implement the Strategy.

## II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

8. Communication and outreach are crucial for the effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. In order to maximize the use of new and existing communication tools and outreach opportunities to achieve the objective of the Protocol in a systematic, coordinated and cost-effective manner, a strategy is necessary. Over the past years, the Secretariat has initiated different activities and employed various means to publicize and communicate information about the Biosafety Protocol and to reach out to different target audiences. There a need to streamline the various communication and outreach activities and utilize relevant tools in a systematic and integrated manner.

9. The purpose of this strategy is to guide the Secretariat's efforts in increasing the visibility and awareness of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, facilitating greater understanding of the Protocol's objective, provisions and processes and enlisting active involvement and support of a broader range of

...the objective of this Protocol is to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and *specifically* focusing on transboundary movements

stakeholders in its implementation.

10. The specific objectives of the strategy are:

(a) **To increase public visibility and awareness of the Protocol** (its objective, provisions and processes), *inter alia*, through: branding, publicizing and promoting a corporate identity for the Protocol and communicating consistent messages;

(b) **To inform and educate different target audiences about the Protocol**, including through facilitating timely access to and sharing of information and news using different communication channels;

(c) **To engage, motivate and build collaborative partnerships** with key stakeholders to broaden support for the implementation of the Protocol.

## I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

11. The implementation of this Strategy will be underpinned by the following principles:

(a) *Proactive approach*: The Secretariat shall be proactive in all its communications and outreach activities;

(b) *Simplicity*: Information shall be communicated in simple plain language, devoid of technical jargon and all written material shall be produced in a clear comprehensible format;

(c) *Cost-effectiveness*: Priority shall be given to outreach activities and communication tools that can reach broadest audience at the least possible cost;

(d) *Timeliness*: Information shall be communicated in a timely manner and responses to enquiries shall be provided as promptly as possible;

(e) *Reliability*: Effort shall be made to provide the most accurate, up-to-date and reliable information;

(f) *Accessibility*: All our outreach materials shall be publicly accessible. This will be facilitated, *inter alia*, through making web-based communication tools (i.e. the Protocol website, e-mail listservs and online conferences) as user-friendly as possible and adaptable to the users' needs;

(g) *Feedback*: Regular solicitation of feedback from different target audiences and the general public shall be a core element of all our communication and outreach activities.

## II. TARGET AUDIENCES

12. Implementation of the Protocol is influenced by, and has impacts on, a wide range of stakeholders. These include: policy-makers, regulators, risk assessors, scientists, academics, business and industry, non-governmental organizations, the media, farmers, consumers, women, children, local communities and other groups. However, due to limited resources, this outreach strategy will focus on the following target audiences:

(a) *Government officials* – including: the national focal points, the competent national authorities, decision-makers, regulators, risk assessors, customs officials and other officials playing a central role in implementation of the Protocol at the national level;

(b) *Business and industry* – including those involved in commercial research, production and international trade in LMO commodities: seed suppliers, producers, processors, importers/exporters and transport/shipping and storage companies;

(c) *The media* – including print, radio and television and newswire groups;

(d) *Non-governmental organizations* – including international NGO networks with environmental outreach programmes;

(e) *Academic (universities) and research community* – including university students, faculty, research scientists, as well as scientists in public research institutions.

13. Some of the outreach activities will also target a few other strategic partners who have hitherto not been actively involved in the Protocol process. These will include regional bodies, development banks and international networks.

## III. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

14. The Secretariat is currently utilizing a wide array of communication channels and outreach strategies to promote awareness of the Protocol and participation in its processes. These include publications (brochures, posters, the Biosafety Protocol newsletter, fact sheets, policy briefs and guidelines); the website and e-mail lists; press releases and feature articles for newspapers, journals, radio, and television; presentations at meetings, workshops and side events; school visits and exhibitions during special events such as the International Biodiversity Day. In terms of outreach, the Secretariat has used formal and informal direct contacts and correspondence with specific target audiences (by letter, phone, fax or e-mail), face to face meetings, exchange visits, events of mutual interest, discussion groups, memoranda of understanding and use of existing networks and fora. The Secretariat will continue to leverage and optimize those tools and mechanisms.

(a) *Promotional materials*: The Secretariat shall develop additional promotional materials for the Protocol (including posters, banners, information kiosks, billboards, souvenir pens, t-shirts, and others) and use them during strategic events to increase the visibility of the Protocol.

(b) *Publications*: The Secretariat will continue to update, re-print and facilitate targeted dissemination of its biosafety publications (books, booklets and reports). It will also develop a series of new publications targeted for different audiences. The publications will be produced in all the six UN

languages. They will be made available in both hard copy and electronic format (on CD-ROM) and also through the Protocol website.

(c) *Power Point presentation templates*: Professionally designed Power Point presentation templates, with standard formats including basic messages, photos and graphs, will be prepared for the use of CBD staff. This will help to promote a consistent corporate brand for all SCBD presentations on the Protocol.

(d) *Website*: The Protocol website ([www.cbd.int/biosafety](http://www.cbd.int/biosafety)) will be maintained as the main source of information about the Protocol. The website will provide, *inter alia*, information about major events and new developments under the Protocol, notifications and other announcements, access to relevant documents, reports and news articles, links to other relevant websites, and access to relevant contact information. The Secretariat will continue to expand and improve the structure and content of the website and make it as user-friendly as possible. It will also keep it up to date and ensure that it remains the main source of information about the Protocol and the centrepiece of this outreach strategy.

(e) *Biosafety Protocol e-mail network*: The Secretariat will expand and improve the existing electronic mailing lists to enhance the sharing of news, information and lessons learned regarding the Protocol. Interested users will be enabled to easily subscribe and unsubscribe from the list as they wish.

(f) *New web media*: The Secretariat will explore the possibility of utilising the new web media tools such as blogs, wikis and video web casts to enable users to publish and share information and news about the Protocol in real time.

(g) *Mass media*: The Secretariat will more proactively engage and maximize the media to promote awareness of the Protocol. Hitherto, media communication has been limited to occasional press releases and media interviews. Under this outreach strategy, the Secretariat will establish regular contact with key journalists covering environmental issues. It will also prepare and disseminate more press releases and feature articles to major media houses (i.e. print, radio, television and newswire groups). Furthermore, the database of journalists will be expanded and kept up-to-date to facilitate targeted dissemination of press releases and other information on a regular basis. In addition, regular briefing sessions and seminars will be organized for journalists on different issues under the Protocol.

(h) *Seminars and workshops*: The Secretariat will continue to organize awareness workshops, conferences and side events. Staff from the Secretariat will also continue to give presentations about the Protocol at meetings and conferences organized by others and to give lectures to students from different universities.

(i) *International events*: International events, including global summits, conferences and international days such as the World Environment Day, provide unique opportunities to promote awareness about the Protocol. The Secretariat will increase its presence in such events and set up exhibition booths to display promotional material (such as posters, banners and brochures) and disseminate publications to increase the visibility of the Protocol and raise awareness of the inter-linkages between biosafety and other sustainable development issues.

(j) *Strategic partnerships and networks*: There are a number of organizations (including intergovernmental organizations, the civil society, private sector and academia) pursuing biosafety outreach activities through different platforms and networks. In the implementation of this strategy the Secretariat will establish and strengthen strategic partnerships with relevant organizations to maximize the cost-effectiveness and impact of its communication activities and avoid duplication of efforts. It will regularly identify opportunities to collaborate directly with key partners on joint communication activities, including exchange of news and information, preparation of joint publications, and participation in joint international events such as relevant international days.

#### IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

15. Implementation of the strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis. An evaluation will be carried out by the Secretariat prior to the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to assess progress in implementing the planned activities. The indicators outlined in the implementation plan below will be used to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation process. Some of the general outcome indicators to be used to assess the success of the strategy include: increases in the number of new partners and contacts; the level of participation of different partners/stakeholders in Protocol activities; the level of media coverage of the Protocol.

16. Different methods will be used to evaluate the progress in the implementation of the strategy. These will, *inter alia*, include the following:

- (a) Feedback from the target audiences through e-mails, suggestion button on the website, and informal interactions and comments provided in the feedback page on the Protocol website;
- (b) Analysis of the content of media coverage (news clips) and the educational programmes of other organizations using extracts from the educational materials supplied by the Secretariat;
- (c) Analysis of the nature and trend requests and queries received by the Secretariat from specific stakeholders and the general public;
- (d) Self-assessment by the Secretariat staff;
- (e) Counting the number of page reviews and hits on the Protocol website.

#### V. THE IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

17. The implementation plan below outlines the activities to be implemented to achieve the different objectives, the proposed timeframes, the indicators of success and the units of the Secretariat that will be responsible for implementing the different activities.

Activity	Time frame	Indicators of success	Responsibility
<b>1. To increase visibility and awareness of the Protocol</b>			
1.1 Develop promotional materials and organize exhibitions for the Protocol	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one exhibition organized during the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Protocol</li> <li>• Banners and posters developed for the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the International Year of Biodiversity and side events/fairs</li> </ul>	BSD* & OMG
1.2 Participate in international events and meetings	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations about the Protocol delivered at various meetings</li> <li>• Exhibitions set up at relevant international events/ meetings</li> <li>• Side events organized back-to-back with major events</li> </ul>	BSD, RMCS & OMG**
1.3 Prepare an updated pool of consistent outreach messages about the Protocol and make them available to national focal points (NFPs)	June. – Dec. 2008 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of core messages about the Protocol made available to NFPs and other stakeholders and used in their outreach activities</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG

Activity	Time frame	Indicators of success	Responsibility
1.4 Design PowerPoint presentation templates and make them available to the NFPs in order to establish a corporate identity for the Protocol	June. – Dec. 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PowerPoint presentation templates made available to all NFPs and other interested users</li> </ul>	BSD
<b>2. To inform and educate target audiences about the Protocol</b>			
<b>A: Information Material</b>			
2.1 Develop and disseminate outreach materials (in print and CD-ROM) to NFPs and other target audiences	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 5 new outreach materials/publications produced.</li> <li>At least 8 issues of the Biosafety Protocol News published</li> <li>Press releases and press briefs produced and disseminated</li> <li>Frequently asked questions, fact sheets and briefing notes updated</li> <li>Summaries of yearly activities under the Protocol incorporated in the CBD Year in Review</li> <li>Interactive audiovisuals on the Protocol and biosafety issues developed and distributed</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
<b>B. Website and web-based tools</b>			
2.2 Review, update and improve the Protocol web pages	Jun. – Dec. 2008 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Protocol web pages translated into official UN languages</li> <li>User-friendly features integrated in the website</li> <li>New information and web links added to the website</li> </ul>	BSD & ITS***
2.3 Expand and improve the electronic mailing service	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in subscriptions to the e-mail listserv for notifications, news and information about Protocol</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
2.4 Introduce new media tools such as podcasts and video web casts through the Protocol website	Jan.-June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Video web casts and podcasts introduced by mid 2009</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
<b>C: Media</b>			
2.5 Identify and register journalists and press officers in a database	June-Dec. 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 50 new journalists added to the database</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
2.6 Organize awareness seminars for journalists and press officers for back-to-back with other biosafety meetings	Jul. 2009-Jul 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least four seminars for journalists and press officers organized</li> </ul>	BSD, OMG & RMCS****
2.7 Organize press conferences and media interviews	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews and press conferences organized during major events</li> </ul>	BSD, OMG

Activity	Time frame	Indicators of success	Responsibility
<b>3. To engage, motivate and build stronger collaborative partnerships and networks</b>			
3.1 Maintain regular contact with the NFPs, CNAs and other relevant officials	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased level of correspondence with NFPs</li> <li>Increased feedback from NFPs and other government officials</li> </ul>	BSD
3.2 Establish and maintain regular contact with key journalists (reporters and editors)	Jun.-Dec.08; Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased correspondence with journalists</li> <li>Improvement in media coverage of the Protocol</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
3.3 Establish formal and informal collaboration and partnership with organizations, networks and UN agencies with relevant outreach programmes	Jan.-Dec.09 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More organizations developing and disseminating Biosafety Protocol awareness materials</li> </ul>	BSD
3.4 Establish formal and informal collaboration and partnership with relevant universities	Jan. - Dec.10 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased participation of academia in biosafety activities</li> <li>Seminars and events co-organized with businesses and academia on biosafety issues</li> </ul>	BSD & OMG
3.5 Invite relevant organizations to participate in the different meetings, processes and activities under the Protocol	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number and diversity of organizations participating in the Protocol meetings and other activities</li> </ul>	BSD & RMCS

\* BSD Biosafety Division

\*\* OMG Outreach and Major Groups Unit

\*\*\* ITS Implementation and Technical Support Unit

\*\*\*\* RMCS Resource Management and Conference Services Division

## VI. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

18. The resources for implementing this strategy will vary from year to year. Most of the activities will be covered by the core budget. Some of the activities, including those outlined below, will require extra budgetary resources.

19. The following is an indicative budget for the activities that will not be covered by the core budget of the Secretariat:

Regional seminars for journalists	\$77,000
Information materials/ publications	\$14,000
Translation of the Protocol website into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish	\$50,000
Organization of the 5th Anniversary and setting up of exhibits during the International Year of Biodiversity and other events	\$50,000
Total Budget	\$191,000

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