



Convention on Biological Diversity

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EXPERT MEETING ON THE MODALITIES OF OPERATION OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE

Montreal, 11-14 April 2011

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Annotated provisional agenda

INTRODUCTION

1. Article 14 of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (the Nagoya Protocol) establishes an Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House (ABS Clearing-House) as part of the clearing-house mechanism under Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention.
2. The ABS Clearing-House is a means for the sharing of information related to access and benefit-sharing and it shall provide access to information made available by each Party relevant to the implementation of the Protocol.
3. The Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol (the Intergovernmental Committee) was established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in decision X/1, paragraph 7, in order to undertake preparations for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties, as set out in paragraph 8 of the same decision.
4. Furthermore, in paragraph 12 and annex II of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties decided that the Intergovernmental Committee will consider the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House, including reports on its activities, at its first meeting, from 6 to 10 June 2011. In addition, Article 14, paragraph 4, of the Nagoya Protocol provides that the first meeting of the Parties will decide on the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House.
5. In preparation for the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee, Parties, international organizations, indigenous and local communities, and relevant stakeholders were invited through notifications 2010-216 and 2010-217, dated 16 December 2010, to submit views to the Executive Secretary on the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House by 15 March 2011.
6. Through a generous financial contribution from the European Commission, an expert meeting on the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House is being held in order to assist the Intergovernmental Committee in its consideration of this issue at its first meeting.

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7. Through notifications 2011-009 and 2011-33, dated 18 January 2011 and 15 February 2011, respectively, the Executive Secretary invited Parties, indigenous and local communities, relevant international organizations and other stakeholders to nominate experts and observers for the meeting by 18 February 2011.

8. The group of experts was to be composed of a maximum of eight experts per region and ten observers. In line with usual practice, the experts were selected taking into account their expertise, the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution, and with due regard to gender balance. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, on the recommendation of the Executive Secretary, has approved the list of selected experts for the meeting. The list is available in notification 2011-055, dated 15 March 2011.

9. Substantive issues for consideration by the expert meeting are the following:

- (a) Role of the ABS Clearing-House in implementing the Nagoya Protocol;
- (b) Opportunities for collaboration with existing systems;
- (c) Considerations for the establishment of the ABS Clearing-House; and
- (d) Priorities for a pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House.

10. In order to assist the experts in their consideration of these issues, a document was commissioned by the Secretariat and made available as UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2. In addition, views and information received by the Executive Secretary on the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House are being compiled and are to be made available in document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/3.

11. The documents for the meeting are listed in annex I. They are available on the Secretariat's website at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EMABSCHM-01>.

12. The meeting will be held at the Palais de Congrès in Montréal. Registration of participants will take place upon arrival, starting at 8 a.m.

13. An information note containing details regarding logistical arrangements for the meeting, including registration, information on travel, visa requirements, accommodation and other matters is available at: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/abs/emabschm-01/other/emabschm-01-info-note-en.pdf>.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

14. The meeting will be opened by the Executive Secretary at 9 a.m. on Monday, 11 April 2011.

15. With a view to building on experiences in other relevant international forums, representatives of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Biosafety Division of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be invited to provide an overview of their experience in the development of their respective information-exchange systems and their relevance in the context of the establishment and operation of the ABS Clearing-House.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

16. Participants will be invited to elect the Chair or Co-Chairs for the meeting on the basis of proposals from the floor.

17. Participants will also be invited to adopt the agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/1).

18. The experts may wish to carry out its work in plenary or break out into subgroups, as appropriate. A proposal for the organization of work for the meeting is contained in annex II below.

19. The language of the meeting will be English.

ITEM 3. ROLE OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE IN IMPLEMENTING THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL

20. In considering item 3, the experts are invited to review the objective, role and information-exchange requirements of the ABS Clearing-House as determined by the Nagoya Protocol, and discussed in section II of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2.

ITEM 4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION WITH EXISTING SYSTEMS

21. Under this agenda item, the experts are invited to review and discuss existing activities and systems relevant to the establishment of the ABS Clearing-House. In addition, the experts may wish to consider identifying opportunities for potential collaboration with relevant partners in the establishment and operation of the ABS Clearing-House.

22. To assist in guiding the discussions, the experts may wish to review existing national and regional access and benefit-sharing databases, as well as other relevant information-exchange mechanisms developed by international organizations, agreements or instruments, as presented in section III of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2.

ITEM 5. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE

23. In considering this item, the experts may wish to review and discuss lessons learned from the establishment of other information-exchange mechanisms, in particular the Biosafety Clearing-House, and its implication for the architecture and design of the ABS Clearing-House.

24. Furthermore, the experts are invited to discuss ways in which countries (and other partners) could share information through the ABS Clearing-House, while considering issues such as common formats, common languages, metadata, controlled vocabularies and data reporting. These issues are discussed in section IV of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2.

25. Under this agenda item, the experts are also invited to consider the capacity-building needs and financial requirements of developing country Parties, countries with economies in transition and indigenous and local communities, in the establishment of the ABS Clearing-House in order to enable their active participation during its development and operational phases. These issues are addressed in section V of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2.

ITEM 6. PRIORITIES FOR A PILOT PHASE OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE

26. Under this agenda item, the experts are invited to consider the possibility of developing the ABS Clearing-House in a phased manner starting with a pilot phase. The experts would then be invited to discuss priorities for the development of a pilot phase, and suggest key information that should be exchanged on a priority basis to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

27. In their deliberations, the experts may wish to consider elements related to the establishment of a pilot phase. Possible elements are suggested in section VI of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2:

- (a) Submission of information;
- (b) Information management;
- (c) Networking with existing mechanisms;
- (d) Capacity-building; and
- (e) Reporting requirements.

28. Finally, with a view to supporting the Intergovernmental Committee in its consideration of the modalities of operations of the ABS Clearing-House and the possible establishment of a pilot phase, the experts may wish to consider the list of questions set out in section VII of document UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

29. The Group will be invited to consider and adopt its report, which will be made available to the Intergovernmental Committee as a basis for its discussions on the modalities of operation of the ABS Clearing-House.

ITEM 8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

30. It is expected that the meeting close at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 14 April 2011.

Annex I

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/1	Provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/2	Issues for consideration in the establishment of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House
UNEP/CBD/ABS/EM-CH/1/3	Compilation of information and views on the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House provided for the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Nagoya Protocol

Annex II

**PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF WORK FOR THE EXPERT MEETING ON THE
MODALITIES OF OPERATION OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING
CLEARING-HOUSE**

	<i>Plenary</i>
<i>Monday, 11 April 2011</i> 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Item 1. Opening of the meeting. Item 2. Organizational matters Item 3. Role of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House in implementing the Nagoya Protocol. Item 3. (<i>continued</i>)
<i>Tuesday, 12 April 2011</i> 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Item 4. Opportunities for collaboration with existing systems. Item 5. Considerations for the establishment of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House.
<i>Wednesday, 13 April 2011</i> 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Item 5. (<i>continued</i>) Item 6. Priorities for a pilot phase of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House.
<i>Thursday, 14 April 2011</i> 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Item 6. (<i>continued</i>) Item 6. (<i>continued</i>) Item 7. Adoption of the meeting. Item 8. Closure of the meeting.
