



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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### OPEN-ENDED AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION

Third meeting

Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 24-28 February 2014

Item 3.5 of the provisional agenda\*

### **SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING OF THE CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **A. *Background***

1. Article 14 of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization 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 on Biological Diversity (CBD).

2. In accordance with recommendation 1/1 of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol (the Intergovernmental Committee), the Executive Secretary is currently implementing the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House based on the guidance set out in the annex to recommendation 1/1 and in recommendation 2/4. In addition, the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention endorsed an indicative work plan and timeline for activities to take place until the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP), as contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/11 (decision XI/1 C, paragraph 2).

3. In paragraph 1 of decision XI/1 C, the Conference of the Parties established an informal advisory committee (IAC) to assist the Executive Secretary with the implementation of the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House and to provide technical guidance with respect to the resolution of technical issues arising from the ongoing development of the pilot phase until the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The decision provided that the IAC should be regionally balanced and composed of fifteen experts selected on the basis of nominations provided by Parties.

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4. Thanks to the generous financial support of the European Union, a meeting of the IAC was held in Montreal, from 2 to 4 October 2013. During the meeting of the IAC, it was suggested that the holding of a capacity-building workshop back-to-back with the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee should be explored, subject to the availability of funds, and that the outcomes of the workshop on the testing of the pilot phase should be made available to third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee.

### ***B. Attendance***

5. By notification 2013-118 (Ref. No. SCBD/ABS/SBG/jh/8300) of 17 December 2013 and subsequent notification 2014-006 (Ref. No. SCBD/MPO/NP/JS/vf/83072) of 15 January 2014, CBD National Focal Points, ICNP Focal Points, indigenous and local community organizations, international organizations and relevant stakeholders were invited to nominate participants. Approximately 120 participants from all United Nations regions, including representatives from indigenous and local communities, took part in the workshop.

6. In addition, some members of the IAC participated as resource persons.

## **ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

7. The meeting was opened at 9 a.m. on Sunday, 23 February 2013, by Mr. Braulio Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention. Mr. Dias welcomed the participants to the workshop and thanked the European Union and the Government of Norway for their generous financial support in making the workshop possible. He also thanked the governments of Switzerland and Germany, the Japan Biodiversity Fund and the European Union for their contributions to the development of the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House.

8. He noted the importance of the ABS Clearing-House as an essential component in ensuring the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 16 which provides that by 2015 the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation. He emphasized that the workshop provides an opportunity to test the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House, to conduct hands-on training for its use, to improve understanding of the ABS Clearing-House and to enable active participation by building capacity to both submit information and make use of the tools available through the ABS Clearing-House.

9. Following the presentation of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Sarat Babu Gidda, Senior Programme Officer, delivered a brief presentation providing an introduction to the workshop, methodology and organization of work. The importance of participation by those who will make use of the ABS Clearing-House was also emphasized as Mr. Babu Gidda highlighted that the experience and feedback of participants will greatly contribute to making the ABS Clearing-House a user-friendly tool capable of adapting to national circumstances.

## **ITEM 2. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONS AND PROPOSED MODALITIES OF OPERATION FOR THE ABS CLEARING-HOUSE**

10. Mr. Matthew Dias, Programme Officer for the ABS Clearing-House, gave a conceptual overview of the ABS Clearing-House and introduced the pilot phase and roadmap leading up to the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol. The presentation provided an explanation of the registration and search functions and the proposed modalities of operation, including: the different user roles (national focal points, publishing authority and national authorized users), workflow and publishing procedures, and an introduction to the different types of records (national and reference records).

## **ITEM 3. TESTING OF THE PILOT PHASE OF THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE**

11. Under this item, the Secretariat introduced each common format for registering information. Following each presentation, participants took part in hands-on training by registering their national

information (if available) as test records. Pursuant to notification 2013-118, participants were encouraged to bring personal computers and existing national information relevant to the registration of common formats into the ABS Clearing-House. Following the introduction of each common format and subsequent hands-on training, participants were invited to ask questions or make comments regarding the common formats.

12. The common formats were introduced by Ms. Beatriz Gomez Castro, Associate Programme Officer and Mr. Dias, common formats introduced included: National focal points and/or publishing authorities (ABSCH-NFP); legislative, administrative and policy measures on access and benefit-sharing (ABSCH-MSR); competent national authorities (ABSCH-CNA); permits or their equivalent constituting an internationally recognized certificate of compliance (ABSCH-IRCC); checkpoint communiqué (ABSCH-CP); checkpoints (ABSCH-CP) and the virtual library (ABSCH-VLR) and national ABS website/database (ABSCH-NDB).

#### **ITEM 4. PROVISION OF FEEDBACK ON THE PILOT PHASE OF THE ABS CLEARING-HOUSE**

13. Feedback from participants was an integral part of the workshop. As noted by the Secretariat in earlier presentations and statements, feedback from users of the ABS Clearing-House provides essential information in order to adapt the ABS Clearing-House to national circumstances and the needs of Parties and others. Participants were invited to submit feedback through an open discussion and a feedback questionnaire. Following each introduction of the common formats and the subsequent hands-on training, participants were encouraged to provide comments and ask questions. All comments and questions were noted. The broader themes of the feedback are reflected in annex I to the report, while suggestions for specific changes to the common formats will be taken into account and inform the final stage of the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House.

14. In first section of the feedback form participants were asked to complete 10 questions that aimed to evaluate their satisfaction with the quality of the preparation of the instructors, the presentations, and the general logistics of the workshop. This section was meant to give insight on how the capacity-building team can better prepare for and improve the upcoming regional capacity-building workshops. The average score for this section was 4.1 out of 5. Participants were least satisfied by the ratio low of instructors to participants and the problem experienced signing-up to the ABS Clearing-House. Participants were most satisfied by the level of preparation of the instructors and the overall technical support offered by the instructors.

15. In the assessment of the feedback questionnaire, participants generally agreed or strongly agreed that instructions to complete the common formats were easy to understand and that they could accommodate all of the details that countries intend to provide. Further details are provided in Annex II of the report.

16. Overall, the participants emphasized the importance of capacity-building on the ABS Clearing-House. As the first capacity-building workshop, it was recognized that further capacity-building activities were needed, focused on working in smaller groups with higher trainer to participant ratios.

#### **ITEM 5. CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP**

17. Following closing remarks by Mr. Matthew Dias, the workshop was closed at 5.30 p.m., 23 February 2014.

*Annex I*

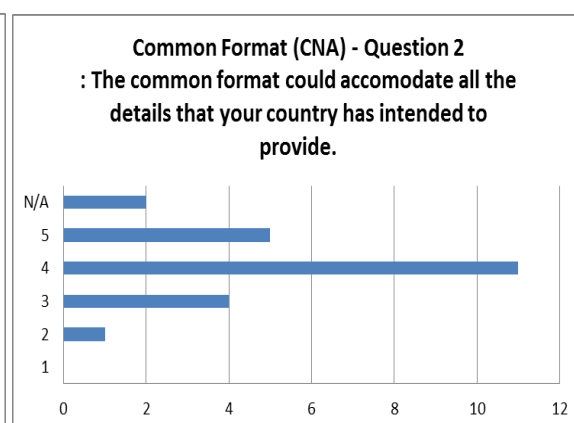
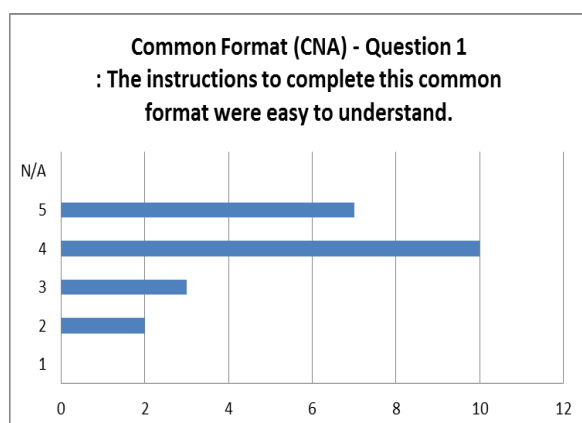
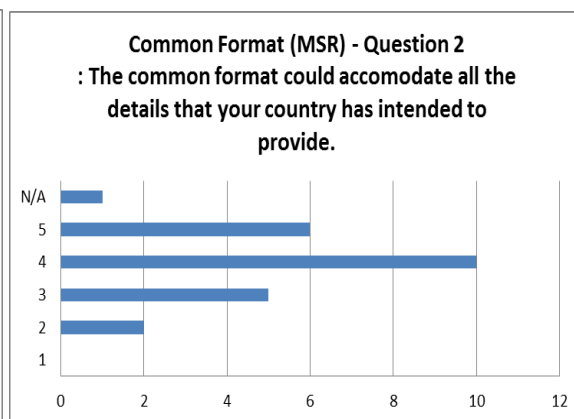
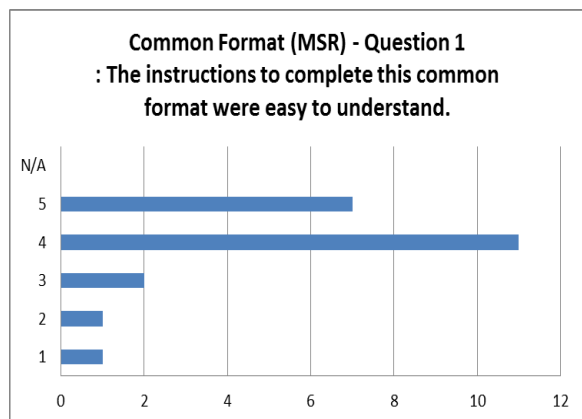
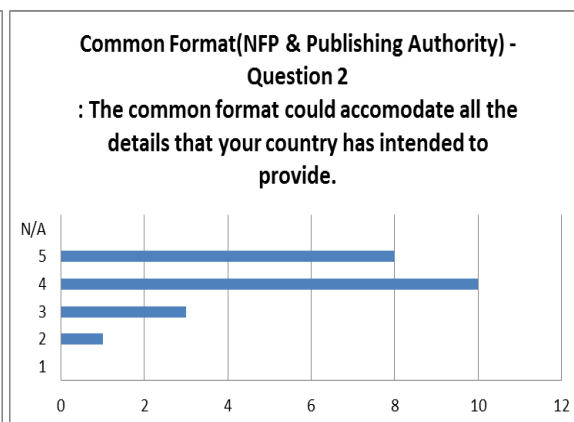
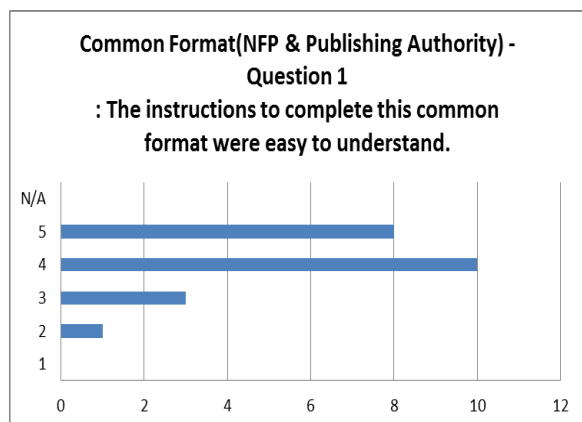
**SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED ON THE PILOT PHASE OF THE ABS  
CLEARING-HOUSE**

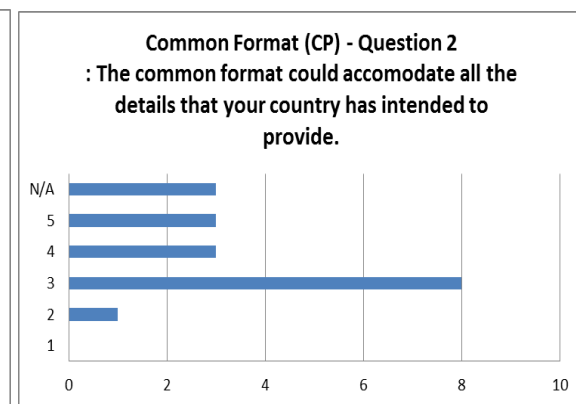
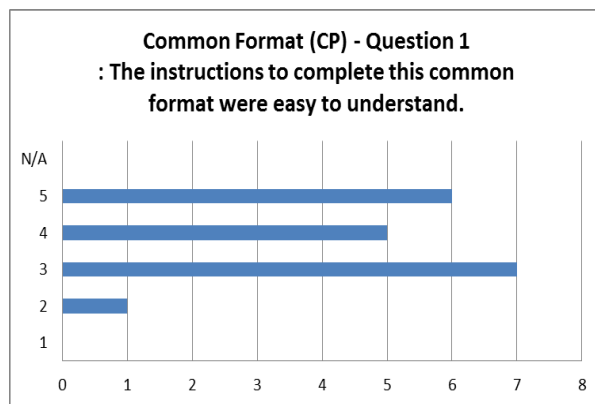
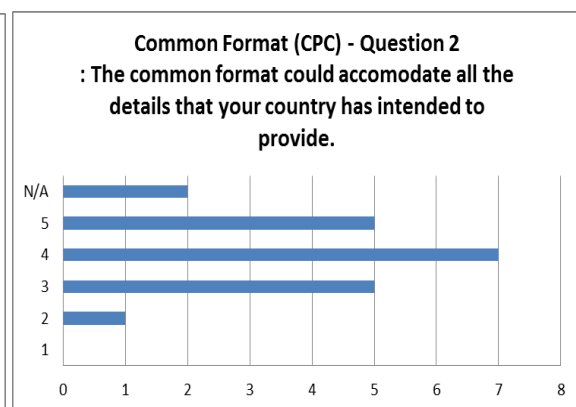
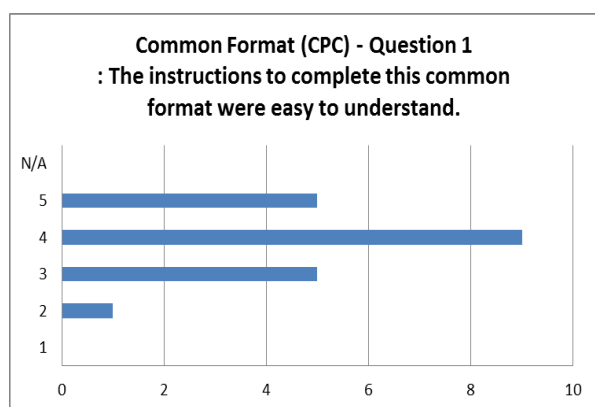
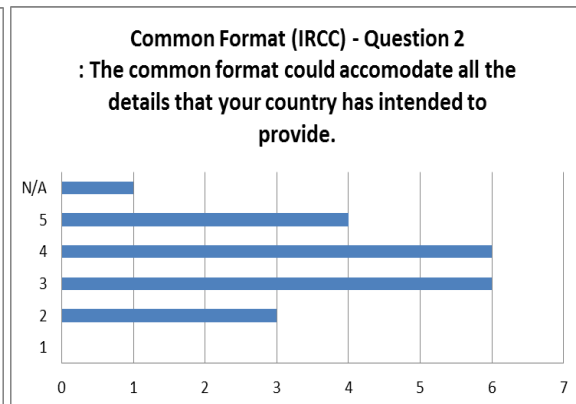
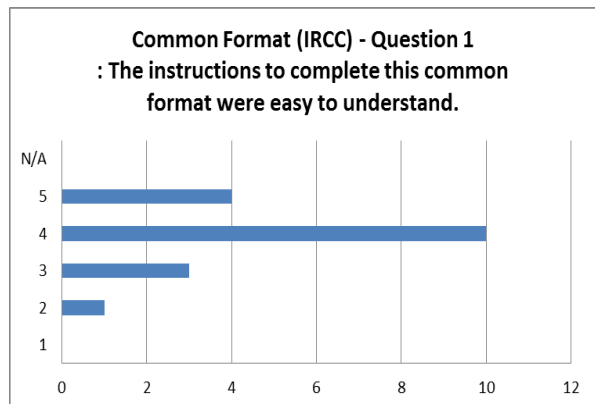
1. Feedback received regarding the common formats of the ABS Clearing-House included:
  - Providing additional guidance regarding the information required in the fields included in the common formats;
  - Comments on the mandatory or voluntary nature of some of the fields included in the common formats;
  - Enhancing clarity on who has published records in the ABS Clearing-House and their different statuses (i.e. records Parties to the Protocol, non-Parties, indigenous and local communities, and relevant stakeholders);
  - Comments on the role of non-Parties in registering information in the ABS Clearing-House and how records from non-Parties would be reflected;
  - Comments on the permit or its equivalent constituting the internationally recognized certificate of compliance, including the addition of the facility to select both commercial and non-commercial use;
  - Comments regarding the issue of confidentiality in the common format on the permit or its equivalent constituting the internationally recognized certificate of compliance;
  - The need for gaining more experience with the implementation of the Protocol, in particular in relation to the functioning of checkpoints and the checkpoint communique;
  - Clarifying the role of the Virtual Library and its relationship with national records to ensure that users of the ABS Clearing-House clearly understand the distinction between national records and reference records;
  - Improving the Virtual Library to highlight the more important data, particularly by whom the record was published;
  - Clarifying the role of participation of indigenous and local communities in the ABS Clearing-House;
  - Clarifying the criteria for validation of reference records by the Secretariat.
2. Feedback received regarding the design of the ABS Clearing-House included:
  - Difficulty navigating through the pages of the common format entry forms, especially on portable computers with smaller screens. Most common format entry fields have been sectioned into three pages, which include: "General", "ABS" and "Review" pages. Suggestions included that the "General" and "ABS" pages be combined into one page or the paging functionality be more visible;
  - Improving immediate feedback in order to keep users of the ABS Clearing-House informed during interactions with the website. Clearer feedback, especially on important interactions including saving and publishing information, would provide users of the mechanism with increased assurance of their activities, satisfying the communication expectations users have with the ABS Clearing-House;
  - Improving the visibility of user roles, permissions and allowed actions available once signed-in;

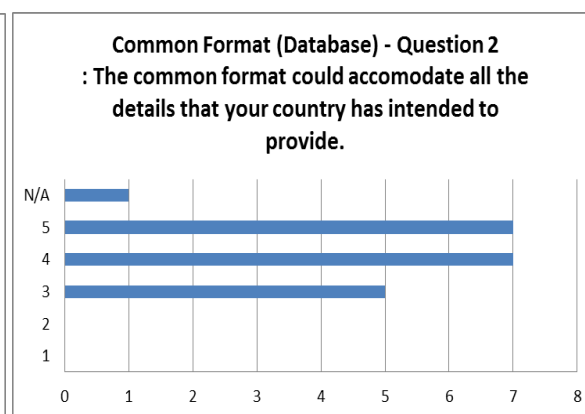
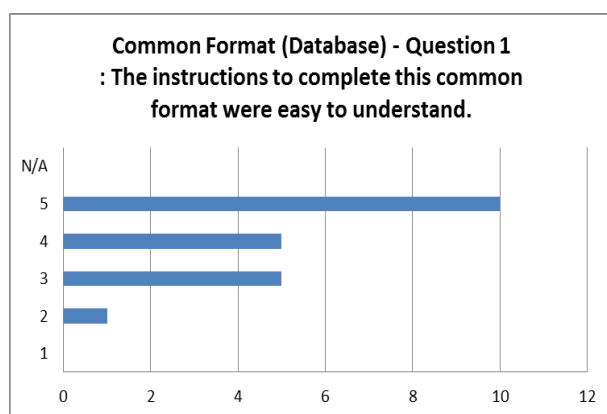
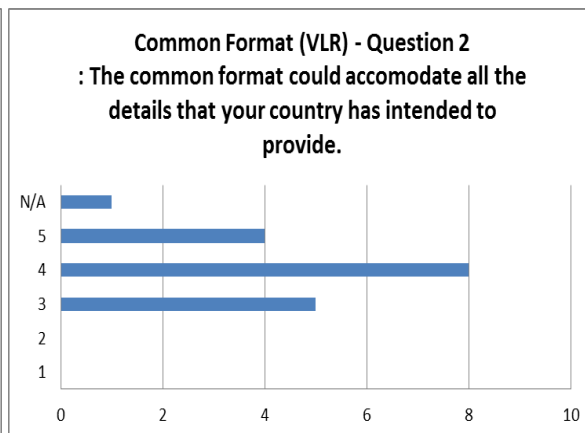
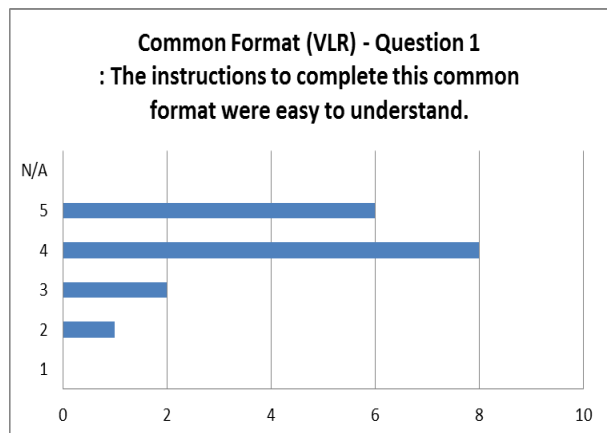
- Improving the metadata displayed accompanying records in search results and in the listing of existing draft records;
  - Providing the automatic saving of draft records during the entry of information would be helpful to reassure users that their data would not be lost especially during moments of intermittent internet connections.
3. Feedback received regarding the technical aspects of the ABS Clearing-House included:
- Solving issues such as: website sign-in, slow loading webpages and the compatibility of the website with older versions of web browsers should be an important priority for the Secretariat as these issues have the potential to completely block users from signing-in and accessing other parts of the ABS Clearing-House;
  - Providing options to facilitate offline submissions due to poor or unstable internet connection or where accessing the internet is not possible.

*Annex II*

**DETAILS OF THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED ON THE COMMON FORMATS**







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