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OPEN-ENDED EXPERT MEETING ON  
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE  
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY  
Havana, 11-13 July 2001  
Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY SUMMARIZING INFORMATION  
RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON CAPACITY-  
BUILDING**

*Report of the First Latin American Course on Capacity-Building in Biosafety*

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. At the request of the Government of Spain, the Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the Open-ended Expert Meeting on Capacity-building for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the report of the First Latin American Course on Capacity-Building in Biosafety, which was held in Cartagena from 26 to 29 June 2001.
2. The report is being circulated in the form and in the languages in which it was received by the Secretariat.

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\* UNEP/CBD/BS/EM-CB/1/1.

## **REPORT OF THE FIRST LATINAMERICAN COURSE ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN BIOSAFETY.**

**Cartagena, Colombia 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> June 2001-07-06**

The ARAUCARIA program is a joint initiative of the Spanish Ministries of Environment, Foreign Affairs, Science and Technology and Economy in order to promote the conservation and Sustainable use of Biological Diversity in Latin-American. This program has three basic principles:

- ⊕ The conservation of Biodiversity
- ⊕ Human Development of Local Communities to make their life compatible with the preservation of Biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystem,
- ⊕ Institutional and organisational strengthening, as a necessary instrument to ease the two above objectives

The ARAUCARIA program, through their horizontal training and specialisation activities, is not only aiming to provide the more adequate information and scientific and technological knowledge to the participants in order to articulate policies, plans and actions for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, but to achieve as well, levels of collaboration and institutional co-operation to cope the conservation of Biodiversity in a global dimension.

With this aim, the Ministry of Environment actively participates promoting specific courses and seminars of priority for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in those aspects related to the advise and capacity building in this area. Definitively to contribute to the generation of new models of sustainable development to avoid the lost of biological resources.

The Ministry of Environment through this program, promote the capacity of technicians at a medium and high level considering the need to assure the continuity of the processes.

In this general context and in order to implement the decisions of the Conference of the Parties and of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol, the first Latin-American course on capacity building in Biosafety was designed.

The aim of the course is to contribute to strength the institutional capacity of latin-american countries in order to assume the responsibilities acquired by the Protocol and the development of administrative structures and legal instrument to establish an effective biosafety regime. Specifically the designation of a national Focal Point; Environmental risk assessment and risk management of LMOs and decision making in the framework of importation of these organisms.

The first course was devoted to representatives of public institutions related with the management of national programs on Biosafety in Latin-American countries, who have some degree of decision in the definition of these policies, or with some kind of participation in the same.

With this goal, a shared program between American and Spanish ponents was drawn. Moreover two practical session related to environmental risk assessment and identification of the needs for the establishment of an institutional and technical framework on biosafety in the region were carried out. Besides, a review and a comparison of the status on biosafety in this region and in the European Union was made.

In this sense, we checked the deferent situation of Latin American countries, having some of them a very developed institutional and legal structure with general regulation of LMOs (Argentina, Cuba, Brazil, Bolivia, Mexico and Guatemala); Other ones which are right in the middle, having regulations on LM plants (Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) and others in which the necessary arrangements for the control of LMOS have not been implemented (El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, etc...).

Concerning the identification of the needs, we considered two levels of development. On the one hand the national needs, and the other hand the regional co-operation in this area.

Related to national needs, three levels of actions were identified:

### **Institutional**

1. Signature and ratification of Cartagena Protocol
2. National inter departmental policy on Biosafety
3. Political commitment to establish a legal framework
4. Public awareness and dissemination of the adequate information to provide civil society with a balanced approach
5. Support to pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing House
6. Creation of Inspector bodies for monitoring and control of the activities with LMOs.

### **Technical**

1. General capacity building for training experts into the different related areas, specifically on the subject of risk assessment and management.
2. Establishment and development of methodologies.
3. Creation of a National Centre of reference to be integrated in the regional network

## **Financial**

1. National and International support.

**Related to regional framework** the following aspects were identified:

1. Establishment of a Regional Laboratory of Reference to co-ordinate the national centres
2. Regional Centre of Capacity Building on Biosafety
3. Regional Centre for exchange of information.

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