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**LIAISON GROUP ON CAPACITY-BUILDING  
FOR BIOSAFETY**

Third meeting

Tromsø, Norway; 20-21 January 2006

**REPORT OF THE THIRD LIAISON GROUP MEETING ON CAPACITY-  
BUILDING FOR BIOSAFETY**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The third meeting of the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building for Biosafety met in Tromsø, Norway from 20-21 January 2006.
2. The meeting was attended by 16 participants. The list of participants is contained in Annex II to this report.
3. The meeting was convened by the Executive Secretary, in accordance with decision BS-I/5 regarding the Coordination Mechanism for the Implementation of the Action Plan on Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which was adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its first meeting. It was hosted by the Norwegian Government.
4. The meeting elected Desmond Mahon (Canada) to serve as its Chairperson and Chris Viljoen (South Africa) to serve as Rapporteur.
5. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda that was provided in document UNEP/CBD/BS/LG-CB/3/1. The following key items were discussed by the meeting:
  - (a) Consideration of the draft background paper on the progress in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
  - (b) Consideration of the report on the roster of biosafety experts.

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## II. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. On the basis of information contained in the draft background paper on the progress in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol prepared by the Executive Secretary for consideration by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, the meeting observed that the current Action Plan did not require a comprehensive revision. Instead, it was recommended that the Action Plan should be updated to incorporate key experiences and lessons learned during its implementation. The draft updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol proposed by the meeting is annexed to this report (Annex I).

7. With regard to the roster of biosafety experts, the meeting considered the report prepared by the Executive Secretary containing a review of the operation and use of the roster and of the voluntary fund that was established to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to pay for the experts selected from the roster. The Liaison Group made recommendations to the Executive Secretary regarding possible measures for improving the use of the roster, which could be included in the pre-sessional paper on the roster of experts that will be considered by COP-MOP at its third meeting.

8. A proposal was also made, for possible consideration by COP-MOP, to de-link the roster from the voluntary fund that was established to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to pay for the use of experts selected from the roster. It was suggested that developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition should be allowed to apply for assistance from the voluntary fund to engage and pay for their preferred experts even if they are not listed on the roster.

## ANNEX I

**DRAFT UPDATED ACTION PLAN FOR BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR  
THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL***1. Objective of the Action Plan*

1. The objective of this Action Plan is to facilitate and support the development and strengthening of capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at the national, sub regional, regional and global levels in a timely manner. In this regard, the provision of financial, technical and technological support to developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing states among them, as well as countries with economies in transition, including countries amongst these that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity, is essential.

2. To achieve the above objective, this action plan aims to provide a general strategic framework to guide and facilitate the identification of country needs, priorities, actions and mechanisms of implementation and funding of capacity-building efforts at the national, regional and international levels.

*2. Guiding principles and strategic approaches*

3. In light of the operational experience and lessons learned from relevant processes, capacity-building initiatives undertaken in support of this Action Plan should, as appropriate:

(a) Be country-driven, i.e. responsive to the needs and priorities identified by the **recipient** countries themselves, taking into account the dynamic nature of some capacity-building needs;

(b) Ensure national ownership and leadership, including setting the agenda and leading the design and implementation of the **initiatives** ~~projects and activities~~;

(c) Ensure systematic and timely participation of **all** relevant stakeholders in the **formulation**, planning and implementation of capacity-building initiatives, ~~including policy makers at the highest level~~;

(d) ~~Adopt~~ Recognizing that capacity-building is a dynamic, progressive **and long-term process, apply** an adaptive and learning-by-doing approach;

(e) Maximize synergy and complementarity ~~with other~~ **among all capacity-building initiatives relevant for biosafety**, ~~including those implemented with support from multilateral and bilateral agencies and other sources~~;

(f) **Apply** ~~Adopt~~ a results-oriented approach, focusing on achieving specific capacity-building outcomes ~~and targets~~;

(g) Promote policy dialogue with donors **and organizations providing biosafety capacity-building assistance** and encourage the participation of civil society and the private sector **in such dialogue**;

(h) **Apply** ~~Adopt~~ a holistic ~~or integrated~~ approach, ~~including linking~~ **integrating** biosafety activities with ~~other~~ **relevant** sectoral and national ~~development~~ policies, strategies and programmes. and

(i) **Encourage the development of nationally-designed, resourced and implemented activities that address the specific needs and priorities of each country.**

3. *Key elements requiring concrete action*

4. The following key elements are meant to be considered in a flexible manner, taking into account the different situations, capabilities and stages of development in each country.

- (a) Institutional capacity-building:
  - (i) Legislative and regulatory framework;
  - (ii) Administrative framework, ~~including decision-making under the Protocol~~;
  - (iii) Technical, scientific and telecommunications infrastructures;
  - (iv) Funding and resource management;
  - (v) Mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring and assessment;
- (b) Human-resources development and training;
- (c) Risk assessment and other scientific and technical expertise;
- (d) **Risk management**;
- (e) Awareness, participation and education at all levels, including for decision makers, stakeholders and the general public;
- (f) Information exchange and data management, including full participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House;
- (g) Scientific, technical and institutional collaboration at sub regional, regional and international levels;
- (h) Technology transfer;
- (i) Identification of living modified organisms, **including their detection**;
- (j) Socio-economic considerations;
- (k) **Implementation of the documentation requirements under Article 18.2 of the Protocol**
  - (l) Handling of confidential information
  - (m) Measures to address unintentional and/or illegal transboundary movements of living modified organisms;
  - (n) Scientific biosafety research relating to living modified organisms;

(o) **The taking into account risks to human health issues related to ~~resulting from the transboundary movements~~ of living modified organisms.**

#### 4. *Processes/steps*

5. The following processes/steps should be undertaken within appropriate timeframes:

- (a) Identification of existing capacities and assessment of capacity needs;
- (b) Prioritization of the key elements by each country and the elaboration and sequencing of actions, including timelines, for building capacities in biosafety;
- (c) Mobilization of existing capacities and ensuring their effective utilization;
- (d) Identification of the coverage and gaps in capacity-building initiatives and resources that could support the ratification and implementation of the Protocol, from the following:
  - (i) Global Environment Facility (GEF);
  - (ii) Multilateral agencies;
  - (iii) Other international sources;
  - (iv) Bilateral sources;
  - (v) Other stakeholders;
  - (vi) National sources;
- (e) **Enhancement of** ~~ing~~ the effectiveness and adequacy of financial resources to be provided by multilateral and bilateral donors and other donors to developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, as well as countries with economies in transition taking, including countries amongst ~~these~~ that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity;
- (f) **Enhancement of** ~~ing~~ synergies and coordination of capacity-building initiatives at different levels;
- (g) Development of indicators for evaluating capacity-building measures at different levels.
- (h) Identification and maximization of opportunities for partnerships and collaborative initiatives in order to leverage resources and achieve greater ~~combined~~ impact.

#### 5. *Implementation*

6. The activities hereunder are indicative tasks to be undertaken at different levels to implement the associated elements and processes identified above. The sequence in which they are listed does not establish any order of priority:

### 5.1 *National level*

- (a) Assessment of the effectiveness and adequacy of existing capacity;
- (b) Assessment of the short-term and long-term requirements for internal and external funding;
- (c) Development of a national biosafety capacity-building strategy and action plan, prioritizing the capacity-building needs, defining the objectives, outputs, targets and specific timelines;
- (d) Integration of biosafety into broader national development strategies and plans, including country Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), Country Assistance Strategies and/or other similar instruments;
- (e) Development and implementation of national ~~regulatory~~ **biosafety** frameworks ~~on biosafety~~;
- (f) Development and/or strengthening of institutional, administrative, financial and technical capacities, including the designation of national focal points and competent national authorities;
- (g) Development of a mechanism for handling requests or notifications, including risk assessment and decision-making, as well as public information and participation;
- (h) Establishment of a mechanism for monitoring and compliance;
- (i) Establishment of a mechanism to inform all stakeholders;
- (j) Establishment of a system to facilitate appropriate participation of all relevant stakeholders;
- (k) Establishment and/or strengthening of a coordination mechanism to promote synchronized and synergistic implementation of capacity-building activities and harmonized use of donor assistance at the country level.

### 5.2 *Subregional and regional levels*

- (l) Assessment of national, bilateral and multilateral funding;
- (m) Establishment of regional websites and databases;
- (n) Establishment of mechanisms for regional and sub regional coordination and harmonization of regulatory frameworks, where appropriate;
- (o) Promotion of regional and subregional collaborative arrangements;
- (p) Establishment of regional and subregional advisory mechanisms;
- (q) Establishment and/or strengthening of regional and subregional centres of excellence and training.

### 5.3 *International level*

- (r) Ensuring effective functioning of the Biosafety Clearing-House;
- (s) Enhancing the effectiveness and adequacy and coordination of financial resources to be provided by multilateral and bilateral donors and other donors to developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them and countries with economies in transition, including countries amongst these that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity;
- (t) Development and effective use of the roster of experts;
- (u) Enhancing synergies and coordination of capacity building initiatives;
- (v) Strengthening South-South cooperation.
- (w) Development/updating of international guidance by relevant international organizations, including UNEP, FAO, IUCN and others;
- (x) Regular review and provision of further guidance by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

#### *6. Monitoring and coordination*

7. Because of the multitude of different actors undertaking different capacity building initiatives, mutual information, coordination and regular monitoring will be promoted in order to avoid duplications and to identify gaps. This exercise will lead to a focus of capacity building on biosafety, ratification, and implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Secretariat and the Biosafety Clearing-House will be actively involved in the process.

8. The Secretariat will prepare, on the basis of Governments' submissions, a report on the steps taken by countries, multilateral/bilateral and other international sources, towards implementation of the Action Plan. The report will be submitted to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol so that it identifies whether the actions listed under section 5 have been carried out successfully and effectively.

#### *7. Review of the Action Plan*

9. A ~~n-independent~~ review of the Action Plan will be undertaken every five years, **based on an independent evaluation of the effectiveness and outcomes** ~~The review will, *inter alia*, endeavor to assess the quality and results of capacity building~~ **initiatives** ~~projects and activities~~ implemented in support of the Action Plan.

**ANNEX II  
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