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FIRST REGIONAL REAL-TIME ONLINE CONFERENCES ON RISK  
ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT UNDER THE  
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY: AFRICA  
10 February 2009

### **REPORT OF THE FIRST REGIONAL REAL-TIME ONLINE CONFERENCES ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT UNDER THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY: AFRICA**

#### *Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. At its fourth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP), in its decision BS-IV/11, established an Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management through the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH). In the same decision, the Parties also established an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management.
2. The Executive Secretary was requested to convene, prior to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in October 2010: (i) ad hoc online discussion groups; (ii) two AHTEG meetings; and (iii) at least one real-time online conference per region prior to each of the two AHTEG meetings.
3. In order to implement decision BS-IV/11, the Secretariat, with the approval of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, launched a continuous process comprising the following events:
  - (a) An open-ended online forum;
  - (b) Discussion groups on specific topics;
  - (c) Two series of regional real-time online conferences (one prior to each AHTEG meeting);and
  - (d) Two AHTEG meetings.
4. In response to this decision, regional real-time conferences were scheduled for, respectively, Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. The objective of the conferences was to identify major issues related to the specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management as outlined in the terms of reference for the AHTEG.
5. Experts in risk assessment who were nominated by Parties for the initial online forum were automatically registered in their respective regional conference. In regions where a low number of experts

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were nominated, those experts, after consultation, opted to participate in other regional conferences. Participants nominated by non-Parties and observers were given the option to participate in one regional conference of their choice. In addition, all forum participants were able to watch the conferences of other regions as “guests”. However, guests could not post interventions.

6. The online conference for Africa took place on 10 February 2009, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. GMT, in the form of a “chat room” where participants were able to post written interventions in English.

7. The conference was chaired by Ms. Hajara-Yusuf Sadiq from Nigeria following her approval as Chairperson of the conference by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Parties. In addition to the Chairperson there were 11 participants to the conference, of which six were nominated by four Parties to the Protocol (Barbados\*, Egypt, Niger and Nigeria), one by a non-Party (United States of America) and four were observers.

8. The conference was organized with the same rules of procedure that apply during regular on-site meeting. Accordingly, participants representing Parties, other Governments and organizations had to request the floor to make interventions and priority was given to experts from Parties to the Protocol. In the event of technical difficulties, Participants were able to consult the Secretariat through a real-time online “Helpdesk” or by telephone.

9. The complete verbatim transcript of the conference is contained in annex I to this report.

10. The final list of participants is contained in annex II to this report.

11. A synthesis document containing an analysis of all four first regional real-time online conferences will be prepared by the Secretariat for submission to the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Management and Risk Assessment.

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\* Barbados opted to participate in this conference in line with the conditions outlined in paragraph 5 above.

*Annex I***FULL TRANSCRIPT OF THE FIRST REGIONAL REAL-TIME ONLINE CONFERENCES ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT UNDER THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY: AFRICA****Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat****10:18 GMT/UTC**

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Dear Participants,

Good morning! Welcome to the Regional Real-time Online Conferences on Risk Assessment and Risk Management: Africa. It is a great pleasure for us at the Secretariat to be gathered here with all of you.

As you may know, at its last meeting in Bonn, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol established an Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management.

The Executive Secretary was requested to convene ad hoc online discussion groups, two AHTEG meetings and at least one real-time online conference per region prior to each of the two AHTEG meetings.

Therefore, the Secretariat is implementing a continuous process comprising the following events: (i) the establishment of an open-ended online forum, (ii) discussion groups on specific topics, (iii) two series of subregional real-time conferences (one series prior to each AHTEG meeting), and (iv) two AHTEG meetings.

Your task in this virtual meeting is extremely important.

On the one hand, the outcome of the regional conferences will serve as a basis for deliberations by the AHTEG, whose first meeting will take place in Montreal from 20 to 24 April 2009.

On the other hand, from the technological point of view, the way we are gathered here today is a breakthrough from the usual face-to-face meetings. Real-time conferences may open a door of infinite possibilities for the exchange of opinions among the Parties and with the Secretariat.

On a technical note, I would kindly ask you to prepare your intervention on the Text Box (centre-bottom of the screen) before requesting the floor because, once the floor is given to you, you will have only 60 seconds to send your intervention.

The Secretariat is available to answer questions through the HelpDesk. To access the Helpdesk online, please use the tab in the top-left corner of the screen. In case of emergency a direct phone number to Montreal, is also available in the top-right corner of the screen.

Without further delay, I would like to welcome all of you to this conference and invite the Chair, Ms. Hajara Yusuf Sadiq from Nigeria, to preside over the conference.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:20 GMT/UTC**

Distinguished Colleagues,

Good morning to you all. I am delighted and honoured to chair this online conference on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs. I am sure this is going to be a wonderful experience for many of us. So I use this opportunity to welcome you all on board.

What is expected of us today is a fruitful discussion on the issue regarding the development of a roadmap for conducting risk assessment and risk management of LMOs. Whatever we are able to discuss today will serve as an inputs for the deliberations by AHTEG on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs scheduled to take place in Montreal, in April 20-24, 2009.

I believe that the Secretariat has sent the guiding questions that will assist us in our discussion. Hope everyone of you found it useful. Please we should all try to adhere to the rules to use the limited time of 60 seconds well. At this point, I declare our conference open.

Thank you

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:22 GMT/UTC**

We will then proceed to Item 2 of the provisional agenda.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:23 GMT/UTC**

## ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

I invite you to turn to the provisional agenda contained in document UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-CB-RA&RM/1/1.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:24 GMT/UTC**

The next item before us is the adoption of our agenda. The provisional agenda was prepared by the Secretariat, and it reflects the objective of our task.

Are there any amendments or objections to any of the items? I therefore propose that we adopt the agenda of the meeting as contained in document UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-CB-RA&RM/1/1.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:25 GMT/UTC**

If no requests for the floor.

Then the provisional agenda as it is before us is adopted.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:26 GMT/UTC**

We can now turn to agenda item 2.2 on organization of work.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:28 GMT/UTC**

As you may be aware, our conference today will end at about 2 p.m. (UTC/GMT). We have three substantive issues on the agenda and I would like to propose that we keep to time on each issue. Please take note that the questions for the three substantive issues is to facilitate our discussions.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:29 GMT/UTC**

If no objection. Then the proposed organization of work is adopted.

I will now invite you all to turn to item 3 on the agenda.

**ITEM 3. SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

The first issue there is Development of a “roadmap”, such as a flowchart, on the necessary steps to conduct a risk assessment in accordance with Annex III to the Protocol;

In the AHTEG conference coming up in April, they will develop a “roadmap”, such as a flowchart, on the necessary steps to conduct a risk assessment in accordance with Annex III to the Protocol and, for each of these steps, provide examples of relevant guidance documents;

So In your own intervention for this discussion, you may wish to suggest:

- Tangible information that may be helpful in developing a roadmap/flowchart other than that contained in Methodology and Points to consider of Annex III to the Cartagena Protocol.

- The guidance materials that are directly applicable to the steps and points to be consider listed in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Annex III to the Protocol.

I will now open the floor for your reactions to this guiding question under Item 3.1.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:32 GMT/UTC**

Which of the specific topics discussed in the Discussion Groups should be prioritized by the AHTEG for the development of further guidance?

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**10:33 GMT/UTC**

What information may be needed to produce a roadmap/flowchart, other than those contained in Methodology and Point to consider of Annex III?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party**

**10:34 GMT/UTC**

Thanks Hajara. Good Morning everybody.

As road map for RA, I would like to support the matrix approach (“hazard identification”, evaluation of likelihood, evaluation of consequences, evaluation of overall risk, risk management, summary of risk assessment including uncertainty) for each introduced gene and each potential adverse effect identified in a systematic manner which is used for RA almost worldwide.

Concerning the roadmap I think, the following additional materials are needed

1. More comprehensive references to hazard identification (problem formulation i.e. what is an adverse effect?)
2. Additional materials on how to implement the recommendation of taking into account the likely receiving environment in the RA. (of special concerns protected areas, threatened species and centers of origin and diversity) taking into account the specific management and use practices from the intended use of the GMO product.

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3. Procedures concerning how to identify the right non-target organism important for a receiving environment and how to assess indirect effects and delayed effects and to integrate these into RA.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:34 GMT/UTC**

Thank you for your contribution Ossama.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:35 GMT/UTC**

Is there any one else who want to make an intervention.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:36 GMT/UTC**

Please the floor is open, we need more intervention.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:38 GMT/UTC**

Can we then proceed to th

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**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party** **10:38 GMT/UTC**

I too support the matrix approach. I also think that the information provided to be used for the RA is also very important, therefore the quality and credibility of data available for consideration when making risk assessment is critical. Such information must be generated against some recognisable/acceptable standard.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:39 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Wendy.

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**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **10:41 GMT/UTC**

I agree with Wendy but we should note that we still have no real methodology concerning uncertainty analysis although it is very important for an overall assessment.

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**Halimatu Saadiyya Idris - Nigeria – Party** **10:42 GMT/UTC**

Good morning. I support the matrix approach. In addition to identifying the item, where it is coming from, what is involved in such an item and their effects on the environment.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:43 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Ossama and Halimatu, can we give the floor to the observer.

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**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **10:44 GMT/UTC]**

Good morning all, I have a little problem here ... I can't use the copy paste and thus I depend on the indulgence of the Secretariat to please help me out by pasting the text I sent for 3.1.a here. I am very sorry .. tchnical glitches.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosafety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **10:45 GMT/UTC**

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One further suggestion for a roadmap: we identify which points to consider mentioned in paragraph 9 of Annex III can be of relevance in which steps mentioned in paragraph 8 of Annex III, as was suggested by Hans Bergmans in his background document.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **10:45 GMT/UTC**

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Good morning dear colleagues I agree with Dr Ossama. I want to add the selection of laboratories of RA in Africa where there is an experimentation for the identification of any novel LMO that may have adverse effects on agrobiodiversity. More there is an assessment more the risk knowledge increase.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:46 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks for your suggestion Gado.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:47 GMT/UTC**

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Is there anyone else that want to intervene?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **10:49 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks Mahaman, We have been working steadfastly on biosafety issues and it seems the more we investigate, the more interesting biosafety questions we uncover!

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **10:50 GMT/UTC**

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ON BEHALF OF RICARDA STEINBRECHER:

Good morning, distinguished colleagues.

Concerning information and methodologies, there are three aspects that clearly require better inclusion in the RA/RM flowchart. I am thinking of for example “unintended transboundary movement”. How wide do we – or rather an assessor – have to think in terms of geographical spread when considering potential impacts? Is the national boundary the limit? This question becomes acutely relevant for LMOs such as fish, insects, algae or indeed trees, but may equally be relevant for annual crops. Or – how do we deal with centres of origin? And, very importantly, how can we adequately address the issue of socio-economic impacts of LMOs, which so often are ignored in RAs, but are crucial to the mandate of protection and sustainable use of biodiversity. The need for assessment of socio-economic aspects has been most evident for example in the case of GURTs, e.g. Terminator technology. All these need addressing in general terms, as well as in specifics – though at different stages. We require discussion and ultimately guidance on how to make these aspects integral part of the steps in RA.

Additionally, we need to find new ways to deal with unknowns, such as synergistic effects, non-target organisms, plant soil interactions. Unknowns and their existence can easily be lost amongst all the knowns or hide behind assumptions. It is crucial not to lose them in the risk assessments, nor the need to evaluate assumptions. Such deliberations should be taken up in the flowchart/roadmap design.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:52 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Ricarda for your clarification.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:55 GMT/UTC**

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If no more intervention, can we proceed.

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**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **10:55 GMT/UTC**

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I am asking some questions like how to get procedures or guidance to identify non target organism to be introduced in environment and how assess the effects.

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**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **10:57 GMT/UTC**

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I think that we should keep the socio-economic consideration for a further discussion.

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**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **10:57 GMT/UTC**

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While I agree that biosafety research continues to investigate interesting biosafety questions, the roadmap will guide decisionmakers on what issues are relevant to the specific decisions at hand. The roadmap therefore should focus the decisionmaking, not confuse it. As the concept of a roadmap suggests, it should provide a way forward rather than map out the multitude of footpaths that serve to get us lost.

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**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **10:58 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you very much Ossama.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **10:59 GMT/UTC**

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Can we proceed to the next question please.

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**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **11:01 GMT/UTC**

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Just briefly to clarify. The roadmap should help to come to good and reliable risk assessment .. and in this we need to find the right way to prevent harm. So I am not saying we should research the individual questions .. but rather how to incorporate that those questions are dealt with in the assessments and thus are part of the roadmap. So its not about detail here, but the overall view ... just to clarify.

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**Halimatu Saadiyya Idris - Nigeria – Party** **11:01 GMT/UTC**

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The national boundary is normally regarded as a limit particularly for the unintended transboundary movement.

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**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **11:02 GMT/UTC**

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Sorry - I hadn't quite finished the sentence earlier: so we need to deal with questions of socio economic, unknowns, target and non-target organism. But details can be discussed later

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**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:02 GMT/UTC**

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the knowledge of the gene of LMO is very important and guidance materials of RA will help in decision making.



**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:03 GMT/UTC**

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Should note that the risk assessment process on LMOs should not be only envisaged as a part of the decision-making process otherwise uncertainty and gaps of information will be a problem.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:04 GMT/UTC**

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We should adopt a balanced approach that addresses the existing information, and take into consideration the uncertainties and the gaps of knowledge.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:04 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all, we have to proceed to the next question now.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:04 GMT/UTC**

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Which additional guidance materials are DIRECTLY RELEVANT to each risk assessment step listed in paragraph 8? Please specify name of the document and which step it is related to.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:05 GMT/UTC**

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Please the floor is open for your reaction.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:06 GMT/UTC**

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I think that the exercise of sorting out technical documents may be a bit difficult for this discussion and better be done in the AHTEG. However, quite some amount of guidance is available at the different levels. At the same time we still struggle with the task on how to do it in practice in a scientifically valid way. How to use the different approaches and guidance documents available?

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria - Chairperson** **11:07 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Ossama.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:08 GMT/UTC**

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Please we need more intervention.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **11:08 GMT/UTC**

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ON BEHALF OF RICARDA STEINBRECHER:

Concerning guidance material, I am thinking of a document relevant to the roadmap as such and relevant to all of the steps listed in paragraph 8. Prepared in 1998 by the Scientists Working Group on Biosafety, the two volumes of the ‘Manual for Assessing Ecological and Human Health Effects of Genetically Engineered Organisms’ contain many general flowcharts and supporting text highly relevant to the tasks of the AHTEG and our discussion. I will send electronic copies of these to the Secretariat, if that is the right procedure.

Another point relevant to a number of the steps is that of ‘baseline data’. Though crucial to assessment, there is no common understanding or guidance of where to place the baseline or when to use which baseline. For example, the receiving environment consists of the agricultural land (or forestry land) as well as of natural habitats. In different regions and under different agricultural or forestry practices these

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receiving environments can significantly differ for the same LMO. Can a baseline be one that already entails inbuilt loss of biodiversity, such as found in intensive agricultural/forestry practices? Or should a baseline be one that reflects practices allowing for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity? To have the right baseline data and reliable baseline data is crucial for detecting effects early enough to apply appropriate risk management measures, or for detecting delayed direct and indirect effects.

In this context it would be of relevance to also consider the IAASTD report for additional guidance. Agro-ecological practices have their place both in biodiversity protection as well as in food security/hunger elevation.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:09 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Ricarda for your contribution even though you are having technical problem.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:10 GMT/UTC**

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We must think on, availability of scientific information.

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party** **11:13 GMT/UTC**

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Good morning colleagues. Apologies for a slow arrival, there were technical glitches. There are a number of guidance materials that the U.S. has contributed to, and has found helpful in support of its risk assessment processes. I will mention a few. Through the OECD, there is the “Blue Book” “Recombinant DNA Safety Considerations”, as well as a number of documents prepared by the OECD Working Group on Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology relating to the biology of crops and traits, and some additional guidance documents for safety considerations for working with recombinant organisms.

Additionally, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has developed a standard for pest risk analysis for LMOs as a supplement to an existing standard.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:13 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Gado, on the availability of scientific information, do you have any suggestion please?

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:14 GMT/UTC**

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I mean the reference documents of transgenic org

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **11:14 GMT/UTC**

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For steps a-d of paragraph 8, a recent publication by Romeis et al., Assessment of risk of insect-resistant transgenic crops to nontarget arthropods, NATURE BIOTECHNOLOGY VOLUME 26: 203-208 is useful regarding non-target organisms.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:15 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Hector.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:15 GMT/UTC**

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Any more interventions, please.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:16 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Hector for this information.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **11:16 GMT/UTC**

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Further to Hector's suggestion, there are also a number of papers by Angelika Hilbeck that would be helpful re non-target organisms ... I will send the refs or pdfs to the Secretariat.

**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party** **11:17 GMT/UTC**

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I'll add a review of the following: Status and Risk Assessment of the use of transgenic arthropods in plant protection. Proceedings of a technical meeting organised by the Joint FAO/IAEA programme of Nuclear Techniques in food and agriculture and the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention held in Rome, 8-12 April 2002. IAEA-TECDOC-1483.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:18 GMT/UTC**

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I think the report of The Norway Canada Workshop on Risk Assessment for Emerging Applications of LMOs, June 4-6, 2007, Montreal, Canada with its four background papers on "GM trees, Pharmacrops, Viruses and fishes" is quite useful also in this concern

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:19 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all for all the meaningful information.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **11:19 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks, Ricarda. Thanks all. Dear all, if you have additional guidance materials, which you would like to submit in connection with the roadmap, please send the complete references to the Secretariat and we will compile them for submission to the AHTEG.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosafety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **11:19 GMT/UTC**

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Also in relation to agricultural practice, etc., the World Bank's World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development is useful: <http://www.worldbank.org/wdr2008>

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **11:22 GMT/UTC**

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Dear all, if you experience problems to post the text in the conference, please go to the HelpDesk (tab on the top, left corner of the screen) and send the text to us and we will post it on your behalf. Thank you.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:24 GMT/UTC**

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Please may I invite you all now to item 3.2.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:24 GMT/UTC**

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Development of further guidance material on specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management;

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:26 GMT/UTC**

Which of the specific topics discussed in the Discussion Groups should be prioritized by the AHTEG for the development of further guidance?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party**

**11:26 GMT/UTC**

From my point of view the First priority is to get the Road map working for what we are already familiar with. I think our priorities are as follows:

- (g) Risk assessment and risk management of specific receiving environments;
- (c) Risk assessment and risk management of transgenic microorganisms and viruses;
- (b) Risk assessment and risk management of transgenic trees;
- (e) Risk assessment and risk management of LMOs with stacked genes or traits;
- (d) Risk assessment and risk management of transgenic pharmaplants;
- (a) Risk assessment and risk management of transgenic fish;
- (f) Post-release monitoring and long-term effects of LMOs released into the environment.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:27 GMT/UTC**

Thank you, Ossama

**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party**

**11:27 GMT/UTC**

Priority:

Development of an appropriate roadmap;

Risk assessment/management in receiving environment, modified vectors, transgenic plants for biofuels and pharmaplants;

Post release monitoring – impacts of LMO release, inadvertent or intentional, into the environment especially in areas of centers of origin/diversity and consideration of issues of endemism

Harmonisation re monitoring and RA/RM procedures/ guidelines leading to ‘globally’ acceptable standards to facilitate data collection, interpretation and comparison.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:28 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Wendy

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:29 GMT/UTC**

Please do we have more intervention.

**Halimatu Saadiyya Idris - Nigeria – Party****11:30 GMT/UTC**

the priority should be as follows: a, b, c, g,d, e and f. thanks.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party****11:31 GMT/UTC**

Monitoring methodologies and standardised data ok

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer****11:32 GMT/UTC**

I think these specific areas of risk assessment should continue to be tied in to Pareagraphs 8 and 9 of Annex III. The information provided in response to these points should be sufficient for risk assessment; the roadmap can guide risk assessors in how to use the information for the specific topics mentioned in the other interventions.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat****11:32 GMT/UTC**

ON BEHALF OF RICARDA STEINBRECHER:

From our perspective, we would suggest the issue of transgenic trees (LMOs that are trees) to be given high priority, as there is a particular lack of hazard identification, RA and RM methodologies, yet multi-annual field tests are already taking place. Transgenic trees require new sets of modelling and new sets of questions.

Other issues that need prioritising seem to be ‘long-term effects’ and ‘specific receiving environments’.

Even before there is guidance of how to conduct risk assessment studies there is a need for guidance on how to collect appropriate baseline data for the receiving environments. This would need to include for example the identification of the right non-target organisms in the spectrum of receiving environments for a specific LMO and its specific traits.

Guidance is also needed on the issue of how to appropriately assess what the receiving environment is for specific LMOs. Receiving environments differ greatly for the different LMOs, for example between self-pollinating annual field crops in intensive agricultural settings and GE trees that grow for years and decades, that disseminated reproductive material over long distances, and that in themselves provide different habitats for numerous plants, animals and fungi.

Related to long-term effects, there is a need of methodology and of data to assess delayed and indirect effects, for example on food webs, including soil food webs, as well as cumulative and synergistic effects.

**Sidikou Ramatou - Niger – Party****11:33 GMT/UTC**

Bonjour à vous tous. Enchantée de faire votre connaissance. Merci pour cette conférence en ligne. J'espère que nous allons apprendre plein d'information utiles à notre Biodiversité et notre Biosécurité.

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party****11:33 GMT/UTC**

Based on the experience in the U.S. and in other countries, we don't believe that additional guidance about specific types of organisms is what is needed, but rather better sharing of information about how guidance is actually used in individual cases of risk assessment. This is the aim of the Biosafety Clearing-house and we have on our own website examples of risk assessments so that other countries can see how data is used in conducting case-by-case risk assessments.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson****11:34 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Michael for your contribution.

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**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:35 GMT/UTC**

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Welcome Ramatou. You must try to write in English like me.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **11:36 GMT/UTC**

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The practical experiences of countries that have made risk assessment decisions should indeed be studied. Many of the issues raised this morning have been dealt with by these countries.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:37 GMT/UTC**

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Is there any more intervention. If not, can we move to the next question.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:38 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks Micheal but I still think there are still gaps of knowledge the more we dig into we uncover new biosafety questions.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **11:38 GMT/UTC**

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I agree with MICHAEL THE USE OF bch WILL BE IMPORTANT

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **11:39 GMT/UTC**

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I agree with Ossama with regards to the more we look the more questions arise ...

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:39 GMT/UTC**

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We can now proceed to the next question. Thank you all.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:40 GMT/UTC**

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Is there enough scientific information available for developing guidance materials on the topics above and which are the main knowledge gaps?

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:41 GMT/UTC**

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The floor is open for discussion please.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **11:41 GMT/UTC**

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I think we need to analyze and organize the existing information and guidance materials at the first AHTEG meeting in a more structured way. I believe we still have gaps of information on many topics. For some topics, there are no literatures, for other topics there are a lot of literatures which are very difficult to extrapolate to risk assessment. And we still have no real methodology concerning uncertainty analysis although it is very important for an overall assessment.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:41 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks for your contribution Ossam

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:42 GMT/UTC**

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Please we need more intervention

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **11:43 GMT/UTC**

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The floor is open.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat**

**11:43 GMT/UTC**

ON BEHALF OF RICARDA STEINBRECHER:

Concerning transgenic trees: The scientific information available for developing guidance material for transgenic trees is highly lacking. Experience with highly domesticated annual crops in distinct environments is insufficient to provide guidance for RA and RM of transgenic trees. Attempting to use the same methodology and modelling would ignore their much more complex characteristics, their much longer life cycle, their wider dissemination of sexual and vegetative reproductive material, the complexity of forest ecosystems, the socio-economic relevance as well as the relevance to indigenous peoples and local communities.

There is no experience of Bt producing organisms as long-lived partners in complex ecosystems; equally there is no experience of traits such as reduced lignin or cold adaptation or understanding of the possible adverse effects such modification can have on different aspects of trees during their life cycle and as ecosystem partners to numerous plants and animals over decades.

The scientific knowledge available to date is insufficient to develop guidance material of how to conduct risk assessment for transgenic trees. Rather, it seems, we need to develop guidance of which knowledge is required and how it is to be obtained before guidance for risk assessment for transgenic trees can be deliberated and put in place.

As with other GE plants there is a lack of baseline data for receiving environments, and for trees this is even more of a problem, because the receiving environments are both larger and exposed over many more years.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:44 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Ricarda.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party**

**11:45 GMT/UTC**

Concerning transgenic trees, there is a lot of expertise work for the moment in Belgium (and I guess in France, Germany and the Netherlands) on transgenic poplars used to produce biofuels. This issue is certainly of importance for the Belgian party.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:46 GMT/UTC**

Thanks for the information Ossama.

**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party**

**11:46 GMT/UTC**

I think one of the things that have been highlighted during the discussion is that there is a dearth in knowledge related to impacts in different environments; this is related to the question on gene expression in varying environments – replication, toxicity, persistence etc. I think the issue of uncertainty analysis as Dr. Ossama pointed out is also critical and to some extent one of the more worrying factors in RA.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:47 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Wendy.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson**

**11:47 GMT/UTC**

Do we have any more intervention?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party**

**11:48 GMT/UTC**

Hilbeck et al have worked on the BT in some research paper.

/...

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer 11:49 GMT/UTC**

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We should distinguish between what might be data gaps and what we are trying to accomplish, which is to develop a roadmap, or a process for risk assessment into which the data fits. Thus the guidance for information and points to consider in Annex III continues to be relevant, and our roadmap should focus on how to use that information in risk assessment. This includes how to deal with any gaps in data this may still remain, and at what point the information is sufficient for a decision.

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party 11:50 GMT/UTC**

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I agree with Ossama that a compilation of existing guidance materials would be useful. The issue of uncertainty is also important. I believe that as risk assessors there is a need to understand where such uncertainty arises but also to place it in context with familiarity and knowledge about the parent organisms and other certainties relating to the use of existing practices and conventional organisms.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson 11:51 GMT/UTC**

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If no more intervention, can we proceed to the next question before the lunch break.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) - Observer 11:52 GMT/UTC**

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Just to add another angle, we also have the aspect of evidence validity or validation. Just not to be too sure in our assumptions or even evidence .. need to inbuild evaluation

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson 11:53 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all. Please can we move to the next question.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson 11:53 GMT/UTC**

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Are there other specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management that should be given priority to for the development of guidance materials?

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria - Chairperson 11:54 GMT/UTC**

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Please the floor is open.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party 11:55 GMT/UTC**

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We should adopt a balanced approach that addresses the existing information, and take into consideration the uncertainties and the gaps of knowledge.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party 11:58 GMT/UTC**

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The road map must be practicable and give guidance step by step procedure useful for colleagues/ institutions in the process of developing their capacity.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer 11:58 GMT/UTC**

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1. Guidance on what the appropriate comparator are in each step of the Risk Assessment 2. problem formulation I agree the road must be practical.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson 11:59 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all. Can we break for lunch for 20 minutes if there is no intervention for now.



**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **12:00 GMT/UTC**

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I suggest to have 40 mins, 20 min not enough.

**Sidikou Ramatou - Niger – Party** **12:00 GMT/UTC**

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Sorry for this interruption. Thank you all very much for your contribution.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:02 GMT/UTC**

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That is okay, Ossama. We can go for 40mins if there is no more intervention

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **12:03 GMT/UTC**

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We will reconvene in 40 minutes at 12:40 GMT. Thank you and see you soon.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **12:03 GMT/UTC**

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WHAT IS THE NEXT TOPIC AFTER V

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:04 GMT/UTC**

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. Defining an action plan for the development of guidance materials on specific prioritized aspects as well as the “roadmap”.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:05 GMT/UTC**

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Do you have any suggestion to the AHTEG on how to define its action plan for the development of guidance materials and the roadmap?

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **12:05 GMT/UTC**

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OK THANKS

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **12:05 GMT/UTC**

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We will reconvene in 40 minutes at 12:45 GMT. The meeting is adjourned.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:05 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all. The meeting is adjourn

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **12:45 GMT/UTC**

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THE CONFERENCE WILL BE RECONVENED IN 2 MINUTES!

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **12:47 GMT/UTC**

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Dear all, welcome back to the conference. I would like to invite the Chair to re-start the meeting.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:47 GMT/UTC**

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Welcome back.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:48 GMT/UTC**

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Please here is our guiding question again: Do you have any suggestion to the AHTEG on how to define its action plan for the development of guidance materials and the roadmap?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **12:49 GMT/UTC**

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The AHTEG should focus on the structured approach to risk assessment first, so on the road map, perhaps a kind of decision tree will be appropriate, It would be great to identify existing gaps. Then we will need a discussion on guidance materials - what type of documents we need etc.. Then prioritization should be looked into, and finally the details of guidance materials.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:50 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Ossama.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:50 GMT/UTC**

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The floor is still open for intervention.

**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party** **12:52 GMT/UTC**

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I agree that the road map should be developed first and should be clear and easy to follow (not to get lost in the detail) bearing in mind that it will provide guidance to decision makers in the developing world who very often are not 'experienced' in the science related to the LMO (gene (s)) - environment interactions

Development of guidance materials based on existing information while making provision for additional information to be posted and included as it relates to a specific RA step and as new data becomes available.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:53 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Wendy for your contribution.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **12:54 GMT/UTC**

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I agree with Ossama. It would also be helpful to develop something on how we define gaps or identify them, as they are crucial elements in RA and thus in roadmaps. Existing information might not be sufficient indeed to develop guidance. We need to inbuilt the gaps ... if you know what i mean.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:55 GMT/UTC**

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Hello, we need more intervention please.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **12:58 GMT/UTC**

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By “inbuilding” gaps I mean that we need to make provisions to identify them as part of the road map .. a step within it.

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party** **12:58 GMT/UTC**

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Within Annex III, there is a series of steps in point 8 under methodology that constitutes the initial framework of a roadmap. That forms a good place to start.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **12:59 GMT/UTC**

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You are all doing great. Thank you

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer 13:00 GMT/UTC**

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Indeed Annex III has a provision for dealing with gaps: Annex III: “Where there is uncertainty regarding the level of risk, it may be addressed by requesting further information on the specific issues of concern or by implementing appropriate risk management strategies and/or monitoring the living modified organism in the receiving environment.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer 13:01 GMT/UTC**

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It looks to me that there is plenty of work on the table and that it won't fit into two AHTEG meetings. We could use the first meeting to identify gaps and emergencies, prioritise and see who is willing to work on them in the intersessional period between the two AHTEGs. This medium of real time online conference might help those working groups to discuss matters.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson 13:02 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks for your suggestion Ricarda

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party 13:04 GMT/UTC**

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WE must take into account the countries needs and priorities , political socio-economic aspects and the involvement of all stakeholders to define the action plan.

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party 13:04 GMT/UTC**

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I think Priorities should be based on-line discussion. More precise methodology, data filtering and sorting for available resources should be identified prior the AHTEG meeting will start.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer 13:05 GMT/UTC**

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However, we should not let the development of a roadmap give the impression that countries cannot take decisions. There are many, including developing countries that will already be dealing with LMO approvals and will likely be developing their own roadmaps for practical reasons, in order to move ahead.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat 13:05 GMT/UTC**

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Dear all,

With the view to providing some clarification, the AHTEG shall define an action plan for the development of guidance documents on the specific aspects that were identified as priorities and for testing of the roadmap. This action plan should include the details of a process for monitoring and reviewing the progress made on each of the specific aspects.

What we need are suggestions on how to focus the efforts of the AHTEG in an efficient manner. For that purpose, you are invited to provide recommendations to the AHTEG on the action plan for the development of guidance materials and the roadmap.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party 13:09 GMT/UTC**

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Concretely how to determine for example the probability of gene transfert from GM plant to an adventice the possibility exists in Africa due to the proliferation of sexual parental plants millet , sorghoum etc

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party 13:10 GMT/UTC**

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I think the 1st AHTEG should start organizing the information as a goal of the road map based on Annex III and try to integrate existing information in an organized manner.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:10 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you all. Every one is doing great.

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party** **13:11 GMT/UTC**

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The desire to discuss specific cases is very understandable, and makes for very constructive dialogue between risk assessors. In terms of new guidance documents, however, I would suggest that, if the AHTEG should identify the need for additional guidance documents, they need to be structured but flexible as well as general and as broadly applicable as possible.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:12 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Michael.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **13:12 GMT/UTC**

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I AGREE WITH YOU.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **13:14 GMT/UTC**

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In order to be flexible for different cases and scenarios, the tree Ossama mentioned will just need to have loops built in. Depending on the answer to a question one either moves ahead, sideways or back to base. So we just need to be sure which questions to place at which junction of the tree/circle.

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **13:14 GMT/UTC**

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ON BEHALF OF HALIMATU SAADIYYA IDRIS:

I would like the gaps that existed to be identified so that an input could be made as to the action plan. meanwhile I appreciate the suggestion of Ricarda on the same issue.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:15 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Halima.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:16 GMT/UTC**

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If there is no more intervention, can we proceed to the next question.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:17 GMT/UTC**

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Would you be available, and on which topic, to offer assistance to the AHTEG in case it decides to establish working groups for the development of guidance materials and the roadmap?

**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **13:18 GMT/UTC**

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Certainly I will be available for further developing of the road map e.g. with respect to the improvement of RA, knowledge gaps... etc and of course That does not exclude help on other issues.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:18 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Ossama, that will be great.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:19 GMT/UTC**

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Can we have more intervention please.

**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **13:20 GMT/UTC**

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I would/will definitely be available for AHTEG working groups or processes on a number of issues, including RA/RM of transgenic trees, long term effects, specific receiving environments, and in particular questions regarding uncertainty and evidence validity. Also, where and how best to set baselines? The whole RA road map in general. Basically my answer is a whole-hearted YES.

**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **13:20 GMT/UTC**

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If you are also considering observers, I am available and would be willing to help on issues concerning gene flow, non-targets, and problem formulation as well as developing the steps of the roadmap.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:21 GMT/UTC**

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That is beautiful, Hector. Thank you

**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party** **13:21 GMT/UTC**

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I would also be available for input on the road map to the extent that the Parties feel that it would be helpful. I am a little bit confused as to the specific topics that are under consideration: are these organism class-specific or referring to specific parameters of risk assessments, dealing with uncertainty through risk management measures, etc.?

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:22 GMT/UTC**

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Thank you Michael

**Remi Akanbi - AfricaBio – Observer** **13:23 GMT/UTC**

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I am available for inputs on the microbiological aspect of RA.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:23 GMT/UTC**

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Thanks Remi

**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party** **13:24 GMT/UTC**

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I can be available with respect to the development of the roadmap.

**Mahaman Gado Zaki - Niger – Party** **13:24 GMT/UTC**

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I would also be available on environmental RA

**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **13:25 GMT/UTC**

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Dear all, in principle, the request for help is open to all but it is at the discretion of the AHTEG who will be engaged in what task. Dear Michael, in past workshops and meetings a number of specific issues was identified as needing more guidance material. These are, for instance, trees, microorganisms, pharmaplants, fish, etc as those listed in the online Forum.

**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:27 GMT/UTC**

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Do we still have more intervention. Can we move to the next item

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**Halimatu Saadiyya Idris - Nigeria – Party** **13:27 GMT/UTC**

I will be available for further input and suggestions on the development of the road map and microbiological aspects.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:28 GMT/UTC**

We will have to move to the next item now.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:32 GMT/UTC**

**OTHER MATTERS**

Under this item, the participants in the conference may wish to consider other matters raised and accepted for discussion in accordance with the rules of procedure.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:32 GMT/UTC**

The floor is open.

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:35 GMT/UTC**

If no intervention, we move to the next item.

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**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **13:36 GMT/UTC**

I think a report covering the key points and concrete recommendations made during this discussion should be made to be provided to the AHTEG

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:39 GMT/UTC**

Please can I ask the secretariat to make a remark.

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**Manoela Miranda - UNEP/SCBD/Biosafety – Secretariat** **13:39 GMT/UTC**

Dear all,

We are approaching the end of our conference, and we had today quite a breakthrough in terms of how we can discuss risk assessment of LMOs. The real-time conference for Africa has brought you, Experts in Risk Assessment, together with the purpose of discussing important risk assessment issues and the result is a strong set of recommendations that will assist the AHTEG in their deliberations.

I thank you all for participating in this conference and for the fruitful discussions. I would like to give special thanks to Ms. Hajara Yusuf Sadiq for chairing this conference in a very skilful manner.

For future reference, the full transcript of this conference will be made available in this same internet address in a few hours.

Our work continues until COP-MOP-5 in October 2010. Thank you all, have a good afternoon, and we are looking forward to future discussions!

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**Hajara - Yusuf Sadiq - Nigeria – Chairperson** **13:40 GMT/UTC**

Thank you, my dear colleagues and the Secretariat!

Thanks to all the participants and guests who have make this conference a memorable day. I really appreciate everybody's cooperation during the conference. I would also like to thank the colleagues in the Secretariat for a job well done. They have tried all their effort to make this conference a success by providing all the necessary assistance. It is a great pleasure to be part of this conference and even given the opportunity to chair the Conference! I am looking forward to meeting you all in person in future.

/...

With that, I now declare the First Regional Real-time Online Conference on Risk Assessment and Risk Management for Africa closed.

Thank you. God bless you all

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**Ossama Abdel-kawy - Egypt – Party** **13:41 GMT/UTC**

Thank you Secretariat for your help and chairman for guiding the whole conference I really enjoyed the discussions and look forward to our next meeting whether virtual or actual. Best wishes to all. Ossama

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**Halimatu Saadiyya Idris - Nigeria – Party** **13:41 GMT/UTC**

In addition to Dr Ossama suggestion the same information could also be sent to participants in this forum. thank you.

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**Wendy Hollingsworth - Barbados – Party** **13:42 GMT/UTC**

Thank you all for an enjoyable and informative session.

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**Michael Schechtman - United States of America - Non-Party** **13:43 GMT/UTC**

Thank you all as well for a stimulating and collegial session. I very much appreciated the opportunity to participate with you and look forward to seeing you all at a future meeting.

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**Ricarda Steinbrecher - Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) – Observer** **13:44 GMT/UTC**

Thank you to all, and in particular to the chair and also to the secretariat who helped me out so patiently with all the technical glitches. Thank you and I am looking forward to other installments.

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**Hector Quemada - Program for Biosfety Systems/Calvin College – Observer** **13:44 GMT/UTC**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussions. I look forward to working with all of you further in the future.

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**Remi Akanbi - AfricaBio – Observer** **13:47 GMT/UTC**

This was a very informative session, I look forward to the follow-up sessions.

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