



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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REGIONAL ONLINE REAL-TIME CONFERENCES ON
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS IN
DECISION-MAKING CONCERNING LIVING
MODIFIED ORGANISMS

WEOG and CEE, 13 June 2013

Asia-Pacific, 17 June 2013

Africa, 20 June 2013

GRULAC (Spanish), 27 June 2013

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

1. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) adopted decision BS-VI/13 on socio-economic considerations. The decision comprises a series of activities to be undertaken prior to its seventh meeting. The activities are intended to contribute to the development of conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations.

2. Paragraph 3 of the decision requests the Executive Secretary to convene online discussion groups and regional online real-time conferences to facilitate and synthesize the exchange of views, information and experiences on socio-economic considerations among Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and indigenous and local communities in the context of paragraph 1 of Article 26 of the Protocol.

3. Decision BS-VI/13 also requests the Secretariat to compile, take stock of and review information on socio-economic considerations in order to develop a global overview, keeping in mind national and regional specificities and policies.

4. COP-MOP has also decided to establish an ad hoc technical expert group on socio-economic considerations. The technical expert group is expected to examine the outcomes of the online discussion group, the regional online real-time conferences, and the compilation and review of information with a view to develop conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations, and submit its report for consideration by the seventh meeting of the COP-MOP. The report from the technical expert group is intended to enable the COP-MOP, at its seventh meeting, to deliberate and decide on appropriate further steps towards fulfilling operational objective 1.7 of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the Period 2011-2020 and its outcomes, in a manner that provides flexibility to take into account the situations in different countries.

5. The Secretariat convened an online discussion group from 11 March 2013 to 16 April 2013. More information on the online discussion, including all the contributions made, is available through the portal on socio-economic considerations in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH): http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art26/discussiongroups_se.shtml.

6. The next step in the process is the convening of regional online real-time conferences. Accordingly, five regional online real-time conferences are scheduled to be held as follows:

- (a) Western European and Others Group (WEOG) and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (in English), 13 June 2013 at 13H00 GMT;
- (b) Asia-Pacific (in English), 17 June 2013 at 3H00 GMT;
- (c) Africa (in English), 20 June 2013 at 10H00 GMT;
- (d) Latin America and the Caribbean (in Spanish), 27 June 2013 at 14H00 GMT.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

7. The conferences will be opened by the chairs according to the dates and times listed in paragraph 4 above. Each conference will last for approximately four hours. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated to the participants and announced via the portal on socio-economic considerations in the BCH (http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art26/portal.shtml).

8. Each conference will have a chairperson to facilitate the discussions. The Secretariat intends to invite the same people who chaired the regional conferences that were held in 2011 depending on their availability and acceptance of the invitation.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Adoption of the agenda

9. The participants in each of the conferences will be invited to adopt the agenda for the conference on the basis of the provisional agenda prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-SEC/2/1). The provisional agenda has been prepared keeping in mind the points raised during the online discussion groups and decision BS-VI/13.

2.2. Organization of work

10. The conferences will take place online in the form of a “chat room” where participants will be able to post written interventions. A list of participants will be visible to all who are logged in to the conference. The conference will take up the agenda items one by one. Participants will need to request the floor when they wish to make interventions on the items as they are opened by the Chair for discussion. Participants will be able to consult with the Secretariat in case of technical difficulties through an online “Helpdesk” or by telephone. Prior to the conferences, participants will have the opportunity to test the conference system. Additional information on technical requirements is available through the web page for the real-time conferences: http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art26/about_realtime.shtml.

11. The documentation that will be made available for the meeting is listed in the annex below. Participants are encouraged to prepare their initial interventions for each of the substantive issues in advance based on the following information.

ITEM 3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS ARISING FROM THE IMPACT OF LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

12. Under this agenda item, participants in the real-time conferences will be invited to discuss what socio-economic considerations are. Participants may share their understanding of the concept of socio-economic considerations in the context of paragraph 1, Article 26 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

3.1. Definition of socio-economic considerations

13. Participants may provide a definition or elements of a definition of socio-economic considerations in the context of Article 26 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. They may discuss which process might be appropriate to define socio-economic considerations – international or domestic. They may also address the scope of socio-economic considerations. Participants are invited to examine the following options derived from the views expressed during the earlier discussions on the subject:¹

(i) Definition or elements of a definition

Option 1:

Define socio-economic considerations in relation to sustainability principles or criteria.

Option 2:

Define socio-economic considerations in terms of methodologies regarding how and when to undertake socio-economic assessments.

(ii) Process for the development/use of a definition

Option 3:

Minimum elements or criteria of socio-economic considerations may be identified as part of the guidelines envisaged in operational objective 1.7 of the Strategic Plan to provide a framework for any details that may be developed at the domestic level.

Option 4:

Each Party that requires the inclusion of socio-economic considerations in reaching a decision concerning living modified organisms may define these considerations on the basis of its national and local circumstances.

3.2. Scope of socio-economic considerations

14. Some people argue that the wording in paragraph 1, Article 26 of the Protocol suggests that there must be an impact on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity resulting from the living modified organism in question before any socio-economic considerations may be taken into account. However, others argue that impact has ecological and socio-economic dimensions. Direct impact on the socio-economic situations that may result from a living modified organism should also be taken into account. It is further argued that conservation and particularly sustainable use of biological diversity have intrinsically socio-economic dimensions. Impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are, therefore, wide ranging and should not be limited only to impacts on the components of biological diversity. Participants may, therefore, discuss the following options:

¹ Participants are encouraged to read documents from previous discussions from archives available at this page:

http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art26/se_main.shtml

In examining the options and preparing their interventions, participants are in particular advised to look at the views and information contained in document UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-SEC/2/INF/1 – “Summary of the online discussions March-April 2013”.

Option 1:

Socio-economic considerations need to be limited only to those that arise from the impact of living modified organisms on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

Option 2:

Socio-economic considerations need not be limited only to those that arise from the impact of living modified organisms on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

ITEM 4. OTHER MATTERS

15 Under this item, participants may wish to consider any other matter relevant to their regional conferences. Participants are encouraged to make suggestions of issues or approaches that may contribute to the development of conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations.

ITEM 5. CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

16. It is expected that the conferences will be closed by their respective chairpersons after three to four hours of discussion. The transcripts of the conferences will be made publicly available through the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Annex

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE REGIONAL ONLINE REAL-TIME CONFERENCES ON
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS IN DECISION-MAKING CONCERNING LIVING
MODIFIED ORGANISMS**

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
A. Working documents	
UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-SEC/2/1	Provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-SEC/2/1/Add.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda
B. Information document	
UNEP/CBD/BS/REGCONF-SEC/2/INF/1	Socio-economic considerations: summary of the online discussions of March-April 2013
Documents from previous discussions	http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art26/se_archive.s/
C. Other reference	
Decision BS-VI/13	Socio-economic considerations
