



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/INF/11
22 April 2002

ENGLISH ONLY

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

Third meeting

The Hague, 22–26 April 2002

Agenda item 4.1.4

CAPACITY-BUILDING (ARTICLE 22 AND ARTICLE 28, PARAGRAPH 3)

UNEP/GEF project on the development of national biosafety frameworks

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, a paper on the UNEP/GEF project on the development of national biosafety frameworks, submitted by UNEP/GEF
2. The paper is being circulated in the language and form in which it was submitted.

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INFORMATION PAPER

UNEP / GEF PROJECT ON “DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BIOSAFETY FRAMEWORKS”

The UNEP-GEF global project on the “Development of National Biosafety Frameworks” started in June 2001. Using a country-driven process, the global project has been designed to help up to 100 participating countries to set up their national framework for the management of living modified organisms (LMOs), allowing them to meet the requirements of the Cartagena Protocol.

In order to join the project, a country must:

- ✓ be a signatory to Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, or intend to ratify the Protocol not later than completion of the UNEP-GEF project;
- ✓ be eligible for GEF support
- ✓ not have received assistance from other GEF funded biosafety projects (e.g. the UNEP-GEF Pilot Project).
- ✓ have the National GEF Focal Point formally express the country’s interest in participating in the Project.

For each country, the process of developing their national biosafety framework would consist of four phases: setting up the required project management structures, gathering of baseline information, analysis of that information in consultation with stakeholders, and preparation of the draft national biosafety frameworks (NBF). Whilst allowing for country specific situations, needs, and priorities, each NBF will consist of four common elements:

- a. A regulatory system
- b. An administrative system
- c. A decision making system that includes risk assessment and management
- d. A mechanism for public participation and information

Capacity building for development of NBF

Under the UNDP-GEF Biosafety project, the development of the NBF is country-driven and each NBF is developed through a process of “learning by doing”. The UNEP-GEF biosafety team provides each country with support and advice as needed; these include:

- **A modular toolkit** – this provides a practical “how-to” guide for countries to develop their NBF. The toolkit is being prepared in a flexible manner tailored to meet the diverse needs of different countries, and allows countries to select those tools and ideas that are most useful to them. The first module of the toolkit was distributed to all participating countries in December 2001. The second module will be sent out in May 2002.
- **Regional activities** – these have been designed to promote regional and sub-regional collaboration and exchange of experience on issues of relevance to NBFs. The first round of regional workshops in support of this aim focussed on improving understanding of the issues involved in developing national biosafety frameworks amongst countries in the regions. These workshops have been carried out in cooperation with the CBD Secretariat, which has held back-to-back workshops on the Biosafety Clearing House.

44 national representatives from 35 African countries attended the regional workshop for Africa held in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2002. 56 national representatives from 24 countries attended the regional workshop for Central and Eastern Europe held in Nitra, Slovakia in February 2002. 69 national representatives from 37 countries attended the regional workshop for Asia and the Pacific in Beijing, China in March 2002.

The regional workshop for the Latin America and Caribbean region is presently being organized, and will be hosted by the Government of Argentina in May 2002. Invitations have been sent to 33 countries in the region to attend the workshop.

- **Training workshops** – these are based on the results of the first round of awareness raising workshops at the regional level, the UNEP-GEF Biosafety project is planning two further rounds of training workshops. These workshops are due to commence in the second half of 2002 and will focus on building capacity in participating countries on key issues related to the development of National Biosafety Frameworks such as risk assessment and management, public participation, as well as administrative and regulatory systems.

The results of the first three regional workshops indicated that countries preferred regional meetings that promote networking within regions, and between sub-regions. In this way, the project will be able to meet the special needs of specific groups, as well as supporting more participants from participating countries. The training workshops will be carried out in the following six groups:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| ✓ Francophone Africa | ✓ Latin America |
| ✓ Anglophone Africa | ✓ Small Island Developing States |
| ✓ Asia Region | ✓ C&EE Region |

Dissemination of information

The project team is working to encourage countries to disseminate their relevant information through the BCH. The project also recognises the important role of information

dissemination in biosafety capacity building and is carrying out a number of activities to promote this aim:

- The project website provides information on the current status of the project and on important relevant documents and links on <http://www.unep.ch/biosafety>.
- A mailing list server provides project updates for all relevant contacts and enables the dissemination of relevant information to stakeholders.
- A Quarterly Newsletter is produced for the provision of project related information. The first Newsletter was mailed out in December 2001, and the second is due at the end of April 2002.
- Reports of Regional workshop have been circulated to all participants in the workshops. A synthesis of the results of the regional workshops will be prepared and distributed after the last workshop in Argentina.
- Brochures on the project as well as on capacity building activities in biosafety have also been widely distributed.

Coordination of information on biosafety capacity building activities

The UNEP-GEF project has established initial contacts with bilateral donors and other international stakeholders on biosafety capacity building activities to ensure an easy flow of information, and early identification of opportunities for collaboration. A matrix on capacity building in biosafety has been developed from the Cuba "Action Plan" for capacity building.

This matrix has now been sent out to all potential donors, of which 9 countries had responded to date. A chart summarizing these activities has been produced and an overview will be presented at a side-event of the ICCP3 by the Project Team on 24th April 2002.

Project management and guidance

The Project Steering Committee, which consists of representatives of the ICCP Bureau, the CBD, as well as other UN agencies involved in Biosafety, provides the project with guidance and advice. This committee met for the first time in February 2002 and approved the triennial business plan and the current annual implementation plan for the project.

The Project has enjoyed close relationships with the ICCP Bureau members and will seek to strengthen these relationships in the future.

Implementation Projects

Based on the recommendations of the GEF Strategy on Biosafety, the GEF Council in November 2001 approved 8 demonstration medium size project proposals, presented by UNEP. The participating countries are: Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Poland, and Uganda. Each country already has a National Biosafety Framework and is preparing to implement them fully. These projects will shortly start, in close cooperation with the UNEP-GEF development projects and the experience gained and the synergies between

implementation and development projects will produce a solid basis for future capacity building initiatives.

National Projects

As of 15th April 2002, 77 countries are currently participating in the project, 41 of these have already prepared their draft National Project Document (NPD), and 13 national projects have been approved and are ready to start under the guidance of the relevant regional coordinators.

Africa	Asia - Pacific	Central and Eastern Europe	Latin America and Caribbean
Algeria ^c	Bangladesh ^a	Albania ^a	Antigua and Barbuda ^c
Benin ^b	Cook Islands ^a	Armenia ^b	Argentina ^c
Botswana ^b	Fiji ^a	Croatia ^a	Bahamas ^c
Burkina Faso ^c	Indonesia ^b	Czech Republic ^c	Chile ^a
Central African Republic ^a	Iran, Islamic Republic of ^a	Estonia ^c	Costa Rica ^b
Congo ^b	Jordan ^c	Georgia ^b	Ecuador ^a
Côte d'Ivoire ^b	Kazakhstan ^b	Lithuania ^a	El Salvador ^b
Gambia ^c	Kiribati ^a	Macedonia, The former	Grenada ^a
Ghana ^b	Korea, DPR ^c	Yugoslav Republic of ^a	Guatemala ^b
Guinea ^b	Korea, R. of ^c	Republic of Moldova ^b	Haiti ^a
Ethiopia ^b	Kyrgyz Republic ^a	Romania ^a	Honduras ^b
Lesotho ^c	Lao PDR ^b	Slovakia ^b	Jamaica ^b
Liberia ^b	Lebanon ^a	Slovenia ^a	Nicaragua ^b
Madagascar ^b	Marshall Islands, Republic of ^a	Turkey ^b	Peru ^a
Mali ^a	Myanmar ^a	Ukraine ^a	Saint Kitts and Nevis ^a
Mozambique ^b	Nepal ^b		Uruguay ^a
Niger ^c	Niue ^a		
Nigeria ^c	Palau ^c		
Rwanda ^a	Philippines ^a		
Senegal ^c	Samoa ^b		
Seychelles ^a	Sri Lanka ^a		
Togo ^c	Syrian Arab Republic ^a		
	Tajikistan ^b		
	Tonga ^a		
	Vanuatu ^b		
	Viet Nam ^c		

Note:

- Group a Participating countries currently drafting their NPD
 Group b Participating countries currently negotiating their NPD with the UNEP-GEF team
 Group c Participating countries beginning their projects.