UNEP

CBD

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/INF/13
17 December 2003

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY SERVING AS THE
FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY
First meeting
Kuala Lumpur, 23-27 February 2004
Agenda item 6.2 of the provisional agenda *

INFORMATION SHARING AND THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE (ARTICLE 20, PARAGRAPH 4)

Notes from the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol regarding the Biosafety Clearing-House

The present information document compiles the notes from the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP) on technical issues associated with the implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House. The first note conveyed the recommendations of a liaison group meeting of technical experts, convened by the Executive Secretary in March 2001, to provide advice on technical issues associated with the implementation of the pilot phase. The second note was based on the recommendations of a subsequent liaison group meeting, held in September 2001, and the third note was developed by the Bureau for the third meeting of the ICCP, taking into account the findings of the independent review of the Biosafety Clearing-House, the recommendations arising from regional meetings on the Biosafety Clearing-House, and previous ICCP recommendations. The second and third notes were annexed to the ICCP recommendations on information-sharing from the second meeting of the ICCP (recommendation 2/8) and the third meeting (recommendation 3/3). Copies of the second and third notes are available in languages in the reports of the second and third meetings of the ICCP, contained in documents UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/3/Add.2 and UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/3/Add.3, respectively.

* UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/1.

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First note from the Bureau
March 30, 2001

Note by the Bureau of the ICCP on technical issues associated with the implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House

A. Background

At its first meeting, held in Montpellier, France, from 11 to 15 December 2000, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP) recommended the development of a pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House established by Article 20 of the Protocol. The ICCP identified a number of elements and steps to guide the development of this pilot phase whose objectives were defined by the Committee as follows: i) to build experience and provide feedback for the development of a functional and accessible Internet-based Biosafety Clearing-House, and to identify alternatives to the electronic system; ii) to identify and address capacity needs of countries with respect to the Biosafety Clearing-House (see report of the ICCP meeting as contained in document UNEP/CBD/ICCP/1/9, annex 1).

The ICCP mandated the Bureau to provide management oversight of the development and implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House and to draw upon appropriate technical advisory expertise to facilitate this development and implementation.

The present note contains recommendations made by a liaison group meeting of technical experts on the Biosafety Clearing-House convened at the initiative of the Executive Secretary from 19 to 20 March 2001 to provide advice on technical issues associated with the implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House. At its meeting held on 21 March 2001, the Bureau endorsed these recommendations and requested the Secretariat to convey them (as an information note) to all Governments and invite feedback in order to ensure transparency in the development of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House.

B. Recommendations

I. Guiding Principle

The prototype should be scalable and flexible so as to be able to accommodate future needs. The Biosafety Clearing-House should also include a disclaimer regarding the information it provides during the pilot phase.

II. Establishment of Central Portal

- Make the central portal available to users as soon as possible
- In the design of the central portal, use the elements referred to in Attachment 1

III. Central Database

- Associate all data in the system with comprehensive set of metadata
- Use a controlled vocabulary for the metadata descriptors
- Where possible draw descriptors from multilingual thesauruses to assist in future use of all six official United Nations languages
- Use information exchange protocols to allow interoperability among databases

- Continue to develop common formats along the lines of those attached (Attachment 2, Attachment 3) for review by the ICCP Bureau and make them available to countries for submission of information
- Develop a tool-kit to assist in the establishment of national databases, based on the common formats

IV. Partnerships

Partners with mandatory information (e.g. OECD, UNIDO)

In order to become partners with the Biosafety Clearing-House, these partners must follow specific guidelines for information sharing:

- Countries must indicate the partner institution which is responsible for hosting the specific information
- Partner institution must conform to the Biosafety Clearing-House interoperability standards, including the "availability" of a "minimum" set of data fields/data sets
- Partners must guarantee maintenance, 24- hour/7-day availability and open access
- If availability "standards" are not reached or if partner does not wish to continue to provide information to the Biosafety Clearing-House, all data/information subject to this partnership will be transferred to the Biosafety Clearing-House/Secretariat

Partners with "non-mandatory" information (e.g. International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Research (ICGEB))

- Partnership will be sought to "add value"
- Partners must follow specific guidelines for information sharing such as interoperability standards

V. Non-electronic Access

- Options should address both provider and user
- Options should be country-driven (i.e. respond to country needs)
- First priority should focus on mechanisms to input data
- Prepare guidelines and templates to assist in the input of data (see Section II)

VI. Review

The attached indicators (Attachment 4) are a good basis for evaluation. They will be kept open for the independent review.

Attachment 1

Biosafety Clearing-House: Central Portal

Introduction to the Biosafety Clearing-House	• Background information • Site map • Glossary • Frequently Asked Questions
National Focal Points	
Competent National Authorities	
National laws, regulations and guidelines	• Summary of regulatory system • Links to laws, regulations and guidelines
Bilateral and multilateral agreements	
Decisions	• Decisions taken under the Advance Informed Agreement procedure • Decisions on living modified organisms for food, feed and for processing • Domestic decisions on environmental releases
Risk assessments	
Biosafety research	• Link to ICGEB *Biosafety* bibliographic database and others
Biosafety Roster of Experts	
Capacity-building projects	
Search facilities	• Search by country or region • Search by organism and trait • Advanced search
Related web sites	• Links to OECD, UNIDO and other relevant national, regional and international databases and resources

Attachment 2

Draft common format for movement of LMOs for direct use as food or feed, or for processing (LMO-FFPs) (information required under Article 11 from annex II)

a) Applicant details:	Name	<text entry>
	Organization	<text entry>
	Postal address	<text entry>
	Country	<text entry>
	Telephone	<text entry>
	Facsimile	<text entry>
	Email	<text entry>
b) Responsible authority details:	Name	<text entry>
	Organization	<text entry>
	Postal address	<text entry>
	Country	<text entry>
	Telephone	<text entry>
	Facsimile	<text entry>
	Email	<text entry>
c) Identity of living modified organism:	Name	<text entry>
	Identity	<text entry>

d) Description of living modified organism:	Description of gene modification	<text entry>
	Technique used for modification	<controlled vocabulary for common techniques: plasmid carried by *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*, biolistic methods, electric shock (poration), osmotic shock, other> *and* <text entry – for further detail>
	Resulting characteristics of the living modified organism	<controlled vocabulary for common characteristics: agronomic properties, antibiotic resistance, bacterial resistance, fungus resistance, herbicide tolerance, insect resistance, marker gene, nematode resistance, product quality, virus resistance, other> *and* <text entry – for further detail>
e) Unique identification of the living modified organism:	Unique identifier	<controlled vocabulary: agreed international standards>
f) Recipient and/or parental organism:	Taxonomic status	<controlled vocabulary: agreed international standards>
	Common name	<controlled vocabulary with thesaurus>
	Point of collection or acquisition	<geographic coordinates> *or* <text entry>
	Characteristics of recipient and/or parental organism related to biosafety	<text entry>
g) Centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity:	Centres of origin of recipient and/or parental organism	<controlled: country/region name>
	Centres of genetic diversity of recipient and/or parental organisms	<controlled: country/region name>
	Description of the habitats where the recipient and/or parental organisms may persist or proliferate	<text entry>

h) Donor organism(s):	Taxonomic status	<controlled vocabulary: international agreed standards>
	Common name	<controlled vocabulary with thesaurus>
	Point of collection or acquisition	<geographic coordinates> *or* <text entry>
	Characteristics of donor organism related to biosafety	<text entry>
i) Approved uses:	Approved uses of the living modified organism	<text entry >
j) Risk assessments	A previous and existing risk assessment report consistent with Annex III	<link: see separate format>
k) Handling, storage, transport and use (include packaging, labelling, documentation, disposal and contingency procedures, where appropriate)	Suggested methods for safe handling	<text entry>
	Suggested methods for safe storage	<text entry>
	Suggested methods for safe transport	<text entry>
	Suggested methods for safe use	<text entry>

Attachment 3

Draft Common Format for Biosafety Laws, Regulations & Guidelines (Article 20.3a)

1) Country:	<controlled vocabulary from Convention on Biological Diversity: country list>
2) Jurisdiction:	<controlled vocabulary from Convention on Biological Diversity: country list> *and* <text entry, *e.g. Scotland and Wales*>
3) Title of document:	<text entry, *e.g. Ugandan National Gene Technology Act* >
4) Type of document:	<controlled vocabulary from Protocol: national law / national regulation / national guideline>
5) Subject area:	<controlled vocabulary from Protocol: Pharmaceuticals / Transit and contained use / LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment / LMOs for use as food or feed or for processing / Handling, transport, packaging and identification, etc.> *or* <controlled vocabulary from other sources: Contained use / Field trial / Placing on the market / Transit / Other>
6) Objective:	<Text entry *e.g. "The objective of this Act is to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements."*>
7) Scope:	<text entry *e.g. "These regulations apply to the transboundary movement, transit, handling and use of all living modified plants that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health."*
8) Date of entry into force:	<standard date format: YYYY-MM-DD>
9) Amendments:	<text entry and cross-reference link>
10) Official languages available:	<controlled vocabulary: *e.g. English, French, Urdu*>
11) Other translations and their status:	<text entry>
12) Location of document texts:	<specific types of entry: *e.g. html or pdf or hyperlink or street address and/or official Gazette reference*>
13) Regulatory contact	<Standard contact address details: name, address, phone, fax, email>

14)	Any other relevant information:	<text entry>

[+ name of submitter and date of submission to the Biosafety Clearing-House]

Attachment 4

Review of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House

Suggested indicators for success:

Elements	*Indicators*
Principles	
Development to be guided by principles of inclusiveness, transparency and equity	– Number and variety (regional balance, access to Internet-based and non-electronic information, etc.) of governments participating in the pilot phase
	– Number and variety (regional balance, access to Internet-based and non-electronic information, etc.) of Governments providing information to the Biosafety Clearing-House
Objectives	
To build experience and provide feedback for the development of a functional and accessible Internet-based Biosafety Clearing-House	– Number and regional balance of governments participating in the pilot phase
	– Internet usage statistics
To identify alternatives to the electronic system	– Identification of alternatives to the electronic system
	– Effectiveness of the alternative mechanisms implemented
Identify and address capacity needs of countries with respect to the Biosafety Clearing-House	– Consultation with countries
	– Identification of capacity needs of countries
	– Establishment of mechanisms to address capacity needs
Characteristics	
Amenable to rapid development	– Responses to changing requirements
User-friendly, searchable and understandable	– Efficient search facilities
	– Effective guidelines for use of system
	– Standard key words / meta-data
Efficient mechanism for implementation of the requirements of the Protocol	– Inclusion of information required to implement the Protocol
	– Consultation with countries

Elements	*Indicators*
Information to facilitate decision-making	Inclusion of the following information: – Information under the Advance Informed Agreement procedures – Information on focal points – Information of national competent authorities – National legislation – Decisions – Risk assessment reports – Use of scientific information
Information for Article 11, paragraph 1 (LMO-FFPs)	– Inclusion of information specified in annex II of the Protocol
Access to the roster of experts	– Availability of roster of experts – Searchability of roster of experts
Elements required to implement the pilot phase	
Central portal	– Establishment of central portal – Consultation with countries
Central database	– Establishment of the central database – Information from countries without a national database – Information sent from countries without an electronic infrastructure – Information required to implement Article 11, paragraph 1 – Searchable indexes of information to facilitate decision-making, including that required under the Advance Informed Agreement procedure
Linkage of central portal to national, regional and international databases/nodes	– Number and regional distribution of national, regional and international databases/nodes identified and linked – Level of interoperability between databases

Elements	*Indicators*
Common formats for information	– Creation of common formats for data reporting for major categories of information
	– Consultation with countries
Recommendations in the Annex	
Administrative	– Creation of appropriate administrative arrangements with relevant international organizations
	– Use of existing information systems as models for implementing the obligations under Articles 10 and 11, paragraph 1 of the Biosafety Protocol
	– Access of all countries to existing databases
	– Use of best practices
Oversight and management	– Consultation with Bureau
Technical implementation	– Use of appropriate technical advisory expertise
	– Number and regional balance of Governments facilitating establishment of linkages to the Biosafety Clearing-House
Monitoring and review	– Report of the second meeting of the ICCP report on the progress of the pilot phase
	– Outcome of independent review of the pilot phase
	– Outcome of technical experts meeting to review the pilot phase
Capacity-building	– Number and regional balance of Governments which have submitted their priority needs to the Executive Secretary regarding capacities
	– Identification of capacity-building needs of those countries to be linked to the Biosafety Clearing House
	– Identification of measures to establish a capacity–building programme addressing those needs
	– Preparation of report analysing identified capacity-building and financial requirements of countries in the specified categories
	– Circulation of the above information to the appropriate organizations with a role in capacity-building
Languages	– Ability of pilot phase to enable the use of all six official United Nations languages at a later stage

Elements	*Indicators*
Resources	– Amount of financial support and appropriate technical assistance received from developed country Governments and other donors
Project plan	Inclusion of the following elements in the pilot phase:
	– Establishment of the central portal
	– Creation of appropriate administrative arrangements and partnerships with other international organizations and Governments
	– Identification of relevant databases and resources, and links established where appropriate
	– Establishment of central database(s)
	– Identification and development of appropriate common information formats and search mechanisms
	– Incorporation of mechanisms for adapting existing systems to conform to Biosafety Clearing-House requirements
	– Preparation of a report assessing the capacities of all interested governments
	– Development of a mechanism for non-electronic information-sharing
Timing	– Initiation of all elements of the project plan within one month of availability of resources
Work plan	– Development of a work plan for completion of all tasks in a timeframe that allows for relevant consideration by the second meeting of the ICCP
Government submission of appropriate information	– Time taken for Governments to submit appropriate information (no later than three months after the first meeting of the ICCP)

Second note from the Bureau
October 10, 2001

SECOND NOTE FROM THE BUREAU ON TECHNICAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PHASE OF THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE

The Bureau re-emphasized that the primary audience for the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House is the Governments that will register and retrieve data from the system, and noted that all participants should be encouraged to contribute information to the pilot phase and to actively participate in its development and use.

A. Development of the central portal and the central database

Central portal

- Use an interactive site map with explanatory text as an introductory page to better assist in the use and navigation of the Biosafety Clearing-House.

- Reorganize information categories to consolidate, wherever possible.

- Reconsider the format of the disclaimer on the entry of the central portal to make it shorter.

Management centre

- Recommend that countries establish a national focal point for the Biosafety Clearing-House, which will be responsible for validating data registered on the Biosafety Clearing-House for that country. Other national authorized users will be able to register data on the Biosafety Clearing-House. However, to ensure authenticity of the information, the focal point for the Biosafety Clearing-House will be required to verify the accuracy of the record before it is made public. A copy of each record will also be sent to the ICCP/Biosafety Protocol national focal point for information.

- Facilitate registration of information by the use of automatic defaults whenever possible, and by linking fields with existing information.

- The registration of national focal points should be the responsibility of the Secretariat; however, contact details should be available for editing by national authorized users of the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Central database

- Encourage the use of hyperlinks to existing information, to avoid duplication of work, such as applicant contact details.

- Where possible, make use of existing initiatives such as the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), for example to link taxonomic data with common names of organisms. Special emphasis was also put on linking inserted genes with traits.

Related links

- Allow organizations undertaking biosafety-related activities to register relevant websites on the Biosafety Clearing-House, including brief descriptions and metadata (to be validated by the Secretariat before being made public).

- Review and examine the possibility of including other categories of information in the related websites category of the Biosafety Clearing-House, e.g. creation of a biosafety journal bibliography.

B. Linkage of central portal to national, regional and international databases/nodes

- Continue to encourage international, regional and subregional organizations, and national databases, to become interoperable with the Biosafety Clearing-House.

C. Common formats for registering information on the Biosafety Clearing-House

- Revise the common formats for registering information to enhance user-friendliness.

- Draft common format for registering summaries of risk assessments.

- Recognize the need for common formats to accommodate different categories of LMOs, such as plants, micro-organisms, animals, etc.

D. Development of the Biosafety Clearing-House tool-kit

- Further adapt the tool-kit with a search engine and elucidate the intended audience of each module in the tool-kit.

- Link specific sections of the Biosafety Clearing-House to the appropriate section in the tool-kit to better assist users and incorporate interactive components whenever possible.

E. Cooperation with other international organizations

- Make the guidelines for interoperability with the Biosafety Clearing-House better known to other international, regional, subregional organizations.

- Advise participants that they must ensure that mandatory information housed at other organizations is backed-up appropriately.

F. Alternatives to a Web-based information-sharing system

- Efforts to develop capacities should aim for full and equitable access to the Internet by all regions of the world. Where possible, make use of existing initiatives aimed at addressing the digital divide.

- Develop and disseminate CD-ROM versions of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, for training purposes.

G. Access to the roster of experts

- Pending the outcomes of the second meeting of the ICCP, incorporate the biosafety roster of experts in the Biosafety Clearing-House.

H. Identify and address the capacity needs of countries

- Assist Parties in the development of national databases by making the interoperability guidelines better known, and by developing and making available guidelines for the creation of a national Biosafety Clearing-House. This could include web page templates for the creation of national web sites, interoperable databases to register national information, etc.

- Where possible, encourage incorporation of training workshops on the Biosafety Clearing-House with other relevant biosafety-related meetings, and make regional training workshops an ongoing activity (subject to the necessary financial resources being made available).

- Redesign the "biosafety capacity-building projects" database along the lines of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and include it in the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House to allow organizations to register information online.

I. Languages

- Develop and implement controlled vocabularies and keywords, based on multilingual international thesauri, wherever possible, to facilitate searching and retrieval of information in the official United Nations languages.

- Encourage countries to provide links to information that is available in the official United Nations languages.

J. Monitoring and review

- The future independent review should assess the effectiveness of the pilot phase, as perceived by the different users of the Biosafety Clearing-House, on the basis of the criteria identified in the first note by the Bureau on technical issues associated with the implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Third Note from the Bureau
May 27, 2002

THIRD NOTE ON TECHNICAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PILOT PHASE

I. BACKGROUND

1. Subsequent to the completion of the independent review of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, 2/ the Bureau of the ICCP, in line with the mandate given to it by the first meeting of the ICCP to provide management oversight on the implementation and development of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, has adopted the present note in order to assist the ICCP at its third meeting in its efforts aimed at developing a fully functional Biosafety Clearing-House at the time of entry into force of the Protocol.

2. The present note contains recommendations for further development of the Biosafety Clearing-House, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses that were identified in the report of the consultant in conducting the independent review, taking also into account the recommendations arising from the regional meetings held on the Biosafety Clearing-House, as well as what has been specified in the relevant recommendations of the ICCP regarding the objectives and operation of the pilot phase and the guidance on its monitoring and review.

3. In preparing these recommendations, the Bureau considered the outcome of the report of the independent review, the lessons learned to date in the development and implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, and sought technical advice from the technical experts that had participated in previous liaison group meetings involved in the formulation of technical recommendations for the development and implementation of the pilot phase so far.

4. The Bureau recalled that one main objective of the pilot phase was to build experience and provide feedback for the development of a functional and accessible Internet-based Biosafety Clearing-House, and considered that the pilot phase has been able to demonstrate that a primarily Internet-based system, using open protocols and standards in order to enable the setting of a distributed system, provides a useful and satisfactory model for efficient information exchange under the Biosafety Protocol.

5. The Bureau also noted that, while the pilot phase provides a technological solution to meet the needs of most countries, another main objective of the pilot phase was to identify and address the capacity needs of countries with respect to the Biosafety Clearing-House, and that increased participation of all countries, including the issue of capacities development, needs to be further addressed to enable full participation in the development and implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing–House, in order to achieve the objective of providing appropriate feedback on the development of the pilot phase.

6. The Bureau recognizes also that the issue of the non-Internet based component of the Biosafety Clearing-House needs to be appropriately addressed with a view to cover the interim period at the time of entry into force of the Protocol, until all capacities necessary for full participation in the Internet-based component are in place.

2 / UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/5/Add.1; UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/INF/10

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continued use of the Internet for implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House pilot phase

(a) Ensure the provision of up-to-date information in the Biosafety Clearing-House by encouraging and facilitating countries and organizations to remain custodians of their own data, and through enhanced and continued use of a distributed Internet-based system for sharing data during the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, and thereafter.

(b) Provide access to information and documents available through the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House in different formats (such as HTML, XML, PDF, compressed files and other major document formats), where possible.

2. Central database

(a) Ensure security of the Biosafety Clearing-House databases through the use of 'best practice' procedures (e.g. firewalls, data encryption, etc.).

(b) Recalling the recommendation that countries establish a national focal point for the Biosafety Clearing-House, which will be responsible for validating data registered on the Biosafety Clearing-House for that country, ensure greater integrity of the Biosafety Clearing-House databases through standardization of validation procedures within partner organizations and user countries, and through the automated generation of reports relating to changes in the data to detect unauthorized registration or modification of data.

3. Participation in the pilot phase

(a) Continue to urge all Governments, relevant intergovernmental organizations and other participants to further contribute information to the pilot phase, as soon as possible, and to actively participate in its development and use, prior to the entry into force of the Protocol.

(b) Continue the use of open protocols and standards, and encourage partners to the Biosafety Clearing-House to adhere to and fully implement the interoperability guidelines for the Biosafety Clearing-House in initial and further development of their information systems.

(c) Promote collaboration between information-technology experts, national biosafety clearing-house focal points and partner organizations through, for example, the use of electronic discussion groups to facilitate cooperation and discussion.

(d) Continue the development and distribution of the offline Biosafety Clearing-House on CD-ROM.

(e) Develop templates and models (available online and on CD-ROM), to assist Governments in developing their own national biosafety databases that will be interoperable with the Biosafety Clearing-House.

4. Content of the Biosafety Clearing-House pilot phase

(a) Recognizing the role of the Biosafety Clearing-House in the implementation of the regulatory processes of the Protocol, ensure that access to information through the Biosafety Clearing-House (for example, scientific information) is provided on the basis of quality, neutrality, multidisciplinarity and relevance to the needs of Parties.

(b) Continue to seek partnerships with other international organizations (such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO)), or other scientific sources of information (such as that available through the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention, or ITIS or Species 2000) to add value and global relevance to the regulatory and scientific information provided through the Biosafety Clearing-House.

(c) Expand the capacity-building project database in the Biosafety Clearing-House (for example to include information on other available capacity-building opportunities, such as funding and training opportunities).

(d) To facilitate efficient retrieval of information, refer to existing harmonized unique identification systems for living modified organisms, on the basis of the work of other relevant international organizations, such as the OECD Guidance for the Designation of a Unique Identifier for Transgenic Plants.

5. Development of the Biosafety Clearing-House tool kit

(a) Continue to develop the links between specific sections of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the appropriate sections in the tool kit.

(b) Further develop the tool kit of the Biosafety Clearing-House to include more in-depth training materials, targeted for different audiences.

6. Capacity-building

(a) Recognizing that capacity-building is an ongoing process, and that capacity-building programmes should be developed with a long-term view to ensure sustainability, the Bureau noted that further development of capacity-building activities would be taken up by the ICCP at its third meeting.

(b) Encourage Governments to take into account the synthesis of capacity-building needs identified by the regions for implementation of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House (UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/5/Add.3) in the consideration of the agenda item on capacity-building (UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/6).

(c) Invite the Global Environment Facility and other donors to take into account these identified needs in providing assistance to developing countries, in particular the least developed and the small island developing States among them, and Parties with economies in transition.

(d) Collaborate with existing initiatives and organizations, such as the International Telecommunications Union, to assist in ensuring full and equitable access to the Internet by all regions of the world.

(e) Make available a telephone and fax hotline to offer uninterrupted access to, and dissemination of, information available on the Biosafety Clearing-House.

7. Administration

(a) Recalling the establishment of the Biosafety Clearing-House under paragraph 1 of Article 20 of the Protocol, as part of the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention, to facilitate the exchange of relevant information on living modified organisms, and to assist Parties to implement the Protocol,

(b) Recalling the recommendation of the first meeting of the ICCP that, given the distinctly different roles that the clearing-house mechanism and the Biosafety Clearing-House have, the latter shall be run, at the technical and operational level, as a distinct element. 3/

(c) The ICCP Bureau recommends that the Biosafety Clearing-House be administered and operated in a manner that allows Parties to the Protocol to clearly recognize its status and identity as a tool to implement obligations under the Biosafety Protocol.

8. Monitoring and review

3/ UNEP/CBD/ICCP/1/9, annex

(a) The Bureau will continue to provide management oversight on the implementation and development of the Biosafety Clearing-House, as well as technical guidance on the development of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, utilizing the advice of technical experts, where appropriate.

(b) The ICCP Bureau recommends that future review of the development of the Biosafety Clearing-House should aim to include consultation with a wide variety of countries and participating organizations.
