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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

Second meeting

Montreal, 30 May-3 June 2005

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

STATUS OF CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision BS-I/5, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted an Action Plan for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. It also decided to undertake a comprehensive review and possible revision of the Action Plan at its third meeting. In addition, a Coordination Mechanism was put in place to facilitate the exchange of information with a view to promoting partnerships and maximizing complementarities and synergies between various initiatives for the implementation of the Action Plan. The Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a progress report, and lessons learned, on the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism for consideration by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

2. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol invited Parties and other Governments to submit to the Biosafety Clearing-House information about their capacity-building needs and priorities. It also requested the Executive Secretary to compile, on the basis of that information, a summary report on the capacity needs and priorities for consideration at its regular meetings, and make it available to donor Governments and relevant organizations.

3. The present note provides an overview of status of the capacity-building activities for the implementation of the Protocol. Section II presents a progress report on the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism, including the lessons learned and the limitations encountered.

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4. Section III of the note summarizes the report on the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries. ^{1/} This section also highlights possible measures that could be taken to address the identified needs, including options for enhancing the adequacy and effectiveness of financial resources provided to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the implementation of the Action Plan. The latter issue is specified in section 3, paragraph 4(e), of the Action Plan as one of the key processes to be undertaken to facilitate its implementation.

5. Section IV proposes draft terms of reference for the comprehensive review of the Action Plan. These are intended to clarify the scope of the review and to guide the process of gathering the necessary information to facilitate the review and possible revision of the Action Plan by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol.

6. Section IV summarizes the main issues and options discussed in the note and presents the elements of a possible decision which the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol may wish to consider.

II. PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COORDINATION MECHANISM

7. Since the adoption of the Coordination Mechanism in February 2004, a number of activities have been undertaken to operationalize its different elements. ^{2/} In accordance with decision BS-I/5, this has been done in a phased manner and within existing resources. Initial emphasis was placed on the establishment of the capacity-building databases, the convening of the liaison group meeting and the organization of coordination meetings (see paragraph 12 below). Preliminary work was also done on the establishment of the information-sharing and networking mechanism. The progress made under each of these elements, the lessons learned and the limitations encountered up to 28 February 2005 are summarized in the following paragraphs.

8. *The liaison group on capacity-building for biosafety.* A meeting of the Liaison Group was convened by the Executive Secretary on 27-28 January 2005 in Montreal. In accordance with decision BS-I/5, the Executive Secretary invited 23 experts to attend that meeting. ^{3/} Fifteen experts attended. Participants discussed and adopted the terms of reference and operational modalities for the liaison group. They also reviewed progress in the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism and provided advice on possible measures to enhance the coordination and effective implementation of the Action Plan. Finally, it provided advice on the draft terms of reference for the comprehensive review of the Action Plan that were being developed by the Executive Secretary. The report of the meeting is available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/8).

9. *Biosafety capacity-building databases.* Three searchable capacity-building databases, i.e. for projects, opportunities and country needs, were fully developed by the Secretariat and are accessible through the Biosafety Clearing-House. ^{4/} A new database for the compendium of existing biosafety

^{1/} The full report on the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries is available as information document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7.

^{2/} The elements of the Coordination Mechanism are: (i) a liaison group on capacity-building for biosafety; (ii) biosafety capacity-building databases; (iii) information-sharing and networking mechanism; (iv) coordination meetings and workshops; and (v) a reporting mechanism.

^{3/} The selection of experts was done with due regard to ensuring regional and institutional balance.

^{4/} The databases are accessible at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/capacitybuilding>.

courses is being established. ^{5/} The capacity-building projects database, as of 28 February 2005, contained a total of 108 records, of which 74 were ongoing projects and 34 were completed and archived. The capacity-building opportunities database contained 33 active records, while the country-needs database had 50 records.

10. Common formats and controlled vocabularies have been developed for each of the databases in order to facilitate submission of information in a consistent manner and to facilitate customized searching of the databases in all the six United Nations languages. Records can be registered and updated directly online by persons designated by the institutions owning the records. Record owners are issued with a password to allow them access to the management centre. The design of the databases allows for the attachment of documents containing more detailed information as well as links to other websites.

11. *Information-sharing and networking mechanism.* This element comprises two components:

(a) *The biosafety capacity-building network*, for which a collaborative portal (restricted website) was established in the Biosafety Clearing-House to allow ongoing interaction and exchange information between members of the network. The portal contains discussion forums and an e-mail listserv. As well, operational modalities for the network were adopted by the coordination meeting for Governments and organizations implementing or funding biosafety capacity-building activities held in Montreal on 26-27 January 2005. ^{6/} Furthermore, a Steering Committee was elected to provide overall guidance to the operation of the Network and to oversee implementation of its activities;

(b) *The biosafety information resource centre*, the structure (common format) of which has been developed will soon be incorporated in the Biosafety Clearing-House. In accordance with the recommendation of the Informal Advisory Committee on Biosafety Clearing-House, which met in Montreal on 9-10 November 2004, the design of the resource centre will allow for clear identification of the source of the information. This will facilitate the distinction between information provided by Governments in accordance with Protocol obligations (under Article 20, paragraph 1) and other general scientific, technical, environmental and legal information and resource materials from relevant organizations.

12. *Coordination meetings and workshops.* During the inter-sessional period, two coordination meetings were organized, namely:

(a) *The coordination meeting for academic and other institutions offering biosafety-related education and training programmes*, which was held in Geneva from 4 to 6 October 2004. The meeting was organized and hosted by the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UNEP/GEF Biosafety Unit and the Geneva Environment Network. Thirty-seven participants from 28 academic and other institutions attended. The main outcome of the meeting was the development of a common format for a compendium of biosafety training and education courses, which will be accessible through the Biosafety Clearing-House (see paragraph 9 above). The report of the meeting, including recommendations submitted by the Government of Switzerland for consideration by the present meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, is available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/9); ^{7/}

^{5/} The request to establish that new database was made by the Swiss Government following a recommendation by the Coordination Meeting of institutions offering biosafety training programmes, which met 4-6 October 2004 in Geneva.

^{6/} The modalities are annexed to the report of the meeting, available as information document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/10. It is also accessible at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/bs/bscmcb-01/official/bscmcb-01-05-en.doc>.

^{7/} The report of the meeting is also available at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=BSCMET-01>

(b) *The coordination meeting for Governments and organizations implementing or funding biosafety capacity-building activities*, which was held on 26-27 January 2005 in Montreal. Thirty-three participants attended the meeting. Participants shared information about the ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building initiatives in which they are involved. The meeting adopted operational procedures and guidelines for future coordination meetings. It also recommended measures to enhance the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism and to address the capacity-building needs of countries and gaps in implementation of the Action Plan. Furthermore, the meeting made recommendations for enhancing the adequacy and effectiveness of financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for capacity-building in biosafety. The report of the meeting is available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/10). ^{8/}

13. During the reporting period, a growing interest in the Coordination Mechanism as a means of facilitating the sharing of information related to capacity-building was noted. For example, a users' survey undertaken by the Secretariat during August and September 2004 indicated that a large number of people (64 per cent) accessed the Biosafety Clearing-House primarily to search for information on capacity-building activities. Moreover, many participants who attended the two coordination meetings referred to in paragraph 12 above expressed a strong desire to participate more actively in the various elements of the Coordination Mechanism.

14. The following lessons were learned during the initial phase of implementing the Coordination Mechanism:

(a) The use of "common formats" and "controlled vocabulary" is very helpful in facilitating easy submission and searching of information in the capacity-building databases. For example, the questionnaire (common format) for capacity-building needs enabled countries to identify and submit in a consistent manner their specific needs under each the broad elements of the Action Plan;

(b) It is important to explain and demonstrate the benefits and added-value of the Coordination Mechanism in order to motivate stakeholders to participate in its implementation;

(c) Successful implementation of the Coordination Mechanism will require investment of time and resources. In particular, there is a need for reliable sources of funding for coordination activities, such as organization of coordination meetings;

(d) Participation in the Coordination Mechanism should place as little demand as possible on the participating Government and organizations. For example, where information already exists on the website or database of relevant institutions, links should be made directly to such sources.

15. The following major constraints and challenges were encountered:

(a) *Limited submission of information.* Although considerable effort was made by the Secretariat to populate the capacity-building databases, overall the amount of information shared through databases is still relatively low. For example, only 50 countries submitted information on their needs and priorities. This made it difficult to come up with a meaningful analysis of the overall situation.

(b) *Lack of proactive submission of information.* Most of the information available in databases was solicited and registered by the Secretariat. Very few Governments and organizations proactively submitted their information. Also some information, especially on capacity-building opportunities, was not submitted in a timely manner. This sometimes rendered the information less useful, for example where opportunities were registered when the deadlines were past or almost up;

^{8/} The report of the meeting is also available at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/bs/bscmcb-01/official/bscmcb-01-05-en.pdf>

(c) *Outdated records.* Many records in the capacity-building databases were not updated despite reminders by the Secretariat to their owners. Since the usefulness of the Coordination Mechanism very much depends on the punctuality and currency of the information shared through it, it is important for the records to be kept up-to-date;

(d) *Limited participation in the Coordination Mechanism.* Many key players involved in implementing biosafety capacity-building initiatives have not yet participated in the Coordination Mechanism. Key players need to be identified and encouraged to participate;

(e) *Lack of quality control mechanisms.* Currently, there is no system for ensuring the accuracy, quality and reliability of information shared through the Coordination Mechanism. This issue needs to be addressed in order to maintain the credibility and usefulness of the Coordination Mechanism;

(f) *Limited funding for coordination activities.* During the reporting period, there was limited funding for operationalizing the Coordination Mechanism. Most of the activities, such as the development of the databases and the organization of the liaison group meeting were funded under the core (BY) budget of Secretariat. However, no voluntary contributions were received to support the Coordination Meetings, besides the offer made by the Government of Switzerland. Consequently, there was limited participation from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the two Coordination Meetings that were held. There is a need to identify reliable sources of funding so as to be able to plan and implement the coordination activities with some degree of certainty and predictability.

16. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol may wish to take note of the summary progress report presented above. It may also wish to take note of the reports of the coordination meetings and consider, as appropriate, the recommendations made by the two meetings regarding measures to enhance implementation of the Coordination Mechanism and to promote ongoing collaboration and networking between different biosafety capacity-building initiatives and training programmes.

III. SUMMARY REPORT ON THE CAPACITY-BUILDING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

17. In accordance with paragraph 16 of decision BS-I/5, the present section summarizes the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries for the implementation of the Protocol. The summary is based on information submitted by Parties and other Governments to the Biosafety Clearing-House. ^{9/} The full report is available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7).

18. As of 28 February 2005, at least 50 developing countries and countries with economies in transition had submitted their capacity-building needs and priorities. ^{10/} The majority expressed a need for institutional capacity-building, human resources development and training and capability to undertake risk assessment and risk management. A large number of countries also expressed the need to promote awareness, education and public participation; to build capacity in identification of living modified

^{9/} See the country needs database at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/Pilot/CapacityBuilding/SearchCapacityNeeds.aspx>. Countries use a questionnaire (common format), structured along the lines of the elements of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol. The questionnaire contains a predetermined list of needs (controlled vocabulary) and free text entry fields. Under each element, a maximum of three priorities can be selected.

^{10/} These included: Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Haiti, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Palau, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and Viet Nam.

organisms; and to establish mechanisms to promote information exchange and data management, including participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (see table 1 below).

Table 1: Prioritized list of the broad biosafety capacity needs identified by countries

Broad Capacity-Building Needs Identified	No. of countries	Percentage
1. Institutional-building (including: regulatory capacity, administrative capacity, infrastructure, funding and mechanisms for follow-up)	47	96
2. Human resource development and training	46	94
3. Risk assessment	44	90
4. Risk management	42	86
5. Awareness, education and public participation	41	84
6. Identification of LMOs	39	80
7. Information exchange, data management and participation in the BCH	39	80
8. Technical, scientific and institutional collaboration	35	71
9. Technology transfer	33	67

19. The specific needs and priorities expressed under each of the above broad elements of the Action Plan differed from country to country. However, the following were identified by most of the countries: a lack of financial resources, a shortage of qualified personnel, inadequate legal and institutional frameworks, poor infrastructure and limited access to relevant information. An aggregated compilation of the specific needs is contained in annex I to this note. A detailed analysis is contained in the full report (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7).

Measures for addressing the needs including options for enhancing the effectiveness and adequacy of financial resources

20. There are a number of possible measures that could be undertaken to address the identified needs and priorities of countries. The detailed report (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7) discusses some of the measures, including options for enhancing the adequacy and effectiveness of financial resources provided to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the implementation of the Action Plan as stipulated in section 3, paragraph 4(e), of the Action Plan. ^{11/}

21. Participants in the coordination meeting of 26-27 January 2005 noted that it is important to prioritize among the different types of measures for addressing the needs and gaps in building capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol. In this regard, they recommended that priority should be given in particular to the following measures:

(a) Development of national strategies for capacity-building in biosafety, prioritizing the needs for capacity-building activities in the different components of the national biosafety frameworks. Those strategies would provide a means through which different national initiatives could be developed, implemented and monitored so that they address the country needs and priorities in a systematic, incremental and coordinated manner. They would also facilitate a proactive approach to coordinating and matching the support initiatives with the country needs and priorities.

^{11/} Section 3, paragraph 4 (e) of the Action Plan calls for: “Enhancing the effectiveness and adequacy of financial resources to be provided by multilateral and bilateral donors and other donors to developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, as well as countries with economies in transition taking into account also countries that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity.”

(b) Promotion of regional and subregional initiatives and approaches. These would help countries to address common needs and priorities where resource limitations would otherwise prevent countries from doing so on their own. By pooling together their unique expertise and resources to implement joint regional initiatives, countries may reap benefits beyond the individual inputs;

(c) Enhancing human resources development and the role of academic and other training institutions in addressing the needs of different countries. Training institutions may need to diversify, optimize and adapt their biosafety training programmes to respond to the identified needs. ^{12/} The coordination meeting of institutions offering biosafety training and education programmes which was held in Geneva from 4-6 October 2004, produced useful recommendations in this regard;

(d) Building capacity to enable countries to conduct their own biosafety-related research.

22. In the effort to address the needs and priorities of countries, it would also be important to pursue approaches that are likely to result in sustainability of capacity-building, including for example: (i) promotion of south-south interactions; and (ii) “train the trainers” programmes including enabling local institutions to conduct capacity-building activities.

23. With regard to options for enhancing the adequacy and effectiveness of financial provided to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for capacity-building in biosafety, the coordination meeting of Governments and organizations implementing or funding biosafety activities produced the following recommendations:

(a) Donors should consider simplifying their procedures for making resources available to countries, and harmonizing them to the extent possible, in order to improve access to resources for capacity-building by recipient countries;

(b) Donors and organizations providing assistance should consider providing recipient countries with training in project proposal development;

(c) The Coordination Mechanism should be used to monitor the coverage of capacity-building initiatives, with a view to facilitating identification of gaps that need to be funded;

(d) Donors could consider requiring that countries seeking support for capacity-building initiatives provide information on other related ongoing initiatives;

(e) Donors and organizations supporting capacity-building initiatives should consider informing and involving the public research sector.

24. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the protocol may wish to take note of the report on Capacity need and priorities of countries (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7) and invite developed country Parties, other developed States and relevant organizations to consider the information contained in their assistance programmes. It may also wish to consider the recommendations contained in the reports of two coordination meetings (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/9 and 10) regarding measures for addressing the needs and gaps in building capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol.

^{12/} This may include revision of the scope, content and structure of the curricula and the approaches of delivering the biosafety training programmes.

IV. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND POSSIBLE REVISION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

25. In its decision BS-I/5, paragraph 5, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol agreed to undertake a comprehensive review and possible revision of the Action Plan at its third meeting, on the basis of the progress report compiled by the Executive Secretary and on the needs and priorities submitted by Parties and other Governments. It also decided to review, at the same time, the guidance to the financial mechanism with a view to updating it, as appropriate.

26. In order to facilitate that review process, the Executive Secretary has developed, with advice from the liaison group on capacity-building for biosafety, terms of reference for the review, which are contained in annex II below. The terms of reference outline the objective and expected outcome of the review as well as the type of information needed to facilitate the review and possible revision of the Action Plan and the process of gathering it.

27. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol may wish to consider and adopt the proposed terms of reference. It may also wish to invite Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit to the Executive Secretary information to facilitate the review and possible revision of the Action Plan at its third meeting.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

28. The present note has provided a general overview of the current status of capacity-building efforts to facilitate the effective implementation of the Protocol, in particular the Coordination Mechanism. It is clear from the reports that many developing countries and countries with economies in transition are faced with significant limitations. The most prevalent include a lack of financial resources, a shortage of qualified personnel, inadequate legal and institutional frameworks, poor infrastructure and limited access to relevant information. A wide range of measures is needed to enable countries to effectively address their needs and priorities. This note has highlighted some measures that could be considered, including options for enhancing the adequacy and effectiveness of financial resources.

29. The Coordination Mechanism provides a useful tool to facilitate exchange of information regarding ongoing initiatives for building capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol. It could also facilitate the identification of gaps and emerging needs. In this regard, it is important to enhance its operationalization and to address the constraints identified in this note. In particular, there is a need to broaden the participation by all relevant stakeholders and to increase the amount and quality of information shared.

30. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety may wish to consider adopting a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety,

Recalling its decision BS-I/5 on capacity-building,

Welcoming the note (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/4) prepared by the Executive Secretary on the status of capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Protocol,

Recognizing that a lack of information and the unreliable quality of that information in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) is an impediment to implementation of the Coordination Mechanism,

A. Coordination Mechanism

1. *Welcomes* the progress report on the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/4, SECTION II);
2. *Takes note* of the reports of the coordination meetings for academic and other institutions offering biosafety-related education and training programmes, held in Geneva from 4 to 6 October 2004 and the Coordination Meeting for Governments and organizations implementing or funding biosafety capacity-building activities, held in Montreal on 26-27 January 2005;
3. *Welcomes* the compendium of biosafety training and education courses developed by the coordination meeting of institutions offering biosafety-related training and education programmes and *requests* the Executive Secretary to expedite the process of making it available through the Biosafety Clearing-House;
4. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit for the compendium information on existing biosafety training courses and to use the compendium to identify and take advantage of available training and education opportunities in biosafety;
5. *Urges* countries to identify their biosafety training and education needs and communicate the information to the Biosafety Clearing-House to enable relevant institutions to design appropriate training programmes and packages;
6. *Invites* developed country Parties, other developed States, the Global Environment Facility and relevant organizations to:
 - (a) Provide financial resources and other support for training and education in biosafety, including the provision of scholarships and fellowships for students from developing countries and countries with economies in transition as well as support for “training-of-trainers” programmes and “re-skilling” or “re-tooling” courses;
 - (b) Assist countries to incorporate specific components on training and education in their capacity-building project proposals, for example for the implementation of the national biosafety frameworks.
7. *Encourages* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to:
 - (a) Endeavour to create opportunities and career paths for local professionals trained in biosafety, especially young graduates, in order for them to utilize their skills;
 - (b) Actively involve academic and training institutions in relevant national and international biosafety processes, including the development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks.
8. *Invites* institutions offering biosafety training and education courses to:
 - (a) Regularly update information in the compendium regarding their courses;

(b) Take into account the training needs of countries in order to develop appropriate (demand-driven) training programmes, including those targeted for specific audiences or addressing specific needs;

(c) Participate proactively in relevant biosafety processes at the national, regional and international levels in order to be acquainted with the emerging issues, needs and challenges in biosafety;

(d) Establish collaborative partnerships with other institutions, especially those in developing countries, with a view to transferring skills, sharing experience and course materials as well as fostering harmonization and mutual recognition of the course offerings;

(e) Develop and facilitate distance-learning tools, such as online courses;

9. *Invites* regional and subregional institutions to contribute to capacity-building in biosafety and to actively participate in the Coordination Mechanism;

B. Capacity-building needs and priorities and possible measures for addressing them

10. *Takes note* of the report on the capacity needs and priorities for building capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7) and *requests* the Executive Secretary to make it available to donor Governments and relevant organizations;

11. *Invites* developed country Parties, Governments and relevant organizations to consider the information contained in the report in the development of their assistance programmes;

12. *Reminds* Parties and other Governments that have not yet done so to submit to the Biosafety Clearing-House information on their capacity-building needs and priorities and all those that have done so to update their records on a regular basis;

13. *Invites* organizations and initiatives involved in biosafety capacity-building which have in-country infrastructure, such as GEF-funded biosafety projects, to assist countries in assessing and submitting their capacity-building needs and priorities to the Biosafety Clearing-House;

14. *Urges* Parties and other Governments that have not yet done so to develop national strategies for capacity-building in biosafety, prioritizing the needs for capacity-building activities in the different components of the national biosafety frameworks, in order to facilitate a proactive, systematic and coordinated approach addressing the country capacity-building needs and gaps;

15. *Invites* donor countries and organizations supporting capacity-building activities to:

(a) Consider simplifying the procedures for making resources available, and harmonize to the extent possible, in order to improve access to resources for capacity-building by recipient countries;

(b) Provide training in project-proposal development to interested recipient countries;

(c) Consider requiring that countries seeking support for capacity-building initiatives provide information on other related ongoing initiatives in order to minimize duplication of capacity-building assistance;

C. Comprehensive of the review of the Action Plan

16. *Adopts* the terms of reference for the comprehensive review of the Action Plan for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety contained in annex II to the present note;

17. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit to the Secretariat, no later than six months prior to its third meeting, progress reports on their initiatives contributing to the implementation of the Action Plan as well as views and suggestions on desired revisions to the Action Plan, taking into account the terms of reference for the review;

18. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare a questionnaire to assist Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations in submitting information requested in paragraph 17 above and collaborate with relevant organizations and initiatives which have in-country contacts and infrastructure, such as the UNEP-GEF projects, to assist countries in responding to the questionnaire in order to maximize the collection of information;

19. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare, on the basis of the submissions received, a background paper describing *inter alia* the progress and effectiveness in implementing the Action Plan, the unmet needs/gaps and strategic recommendations to be taken into account in the possible revision of the Action Plan at its third meeting;

20. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare, depending on the outcome of the review, a draft revised Action Plan for consideration at its third meeting.

*Annex I***COMPILATION OF THE SPECIFIC CAPACITY-BUILDING NEEDS EXPRESSED BY COUNTRIES**

General category of needs	Specific capacity-building needs
1. Institutional Building	
a) Regulatory Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance in development of biosafety laws and the corresponding implementing regulations, guidelines or orders • Competence in policy making and decision making related to biosafety • Model legal and administrative regimes • Development of competency in regulatory issues • Training of relevant officials and the public on national biosafety regulatory regimes • Training guides on the national biosafety regulatory regimes • Skills in drafting of biosafety laws and guidelines • Policy guidelines for GMO research and field testing • Training in regulatory implementation, e.g. decision-making principles and procedures • Training in policy analysis to inform regulatory development
b) Administrative Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical and administrative mechanism to handle applications of LMOs • Guidance material on handling applications for import or release of LMOs • Development of administrative procedures and statutory application forms for import of LMOs, deliberate release of LMOs and contained use of LMOs • Administrative practices, including handling of applications for LMO import or release, preparation of LMO applications and dossiers (for potential applicants) and decision-making • Development of safety requirements and procedures for LMO confined field trials and contained use • Guidelines for laboratory-based experiments, testing green house and field trials
c) Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities and equipment for LMO monitoring activities, including: laboratory and greenhouse containment facilities • Certified laboratories for LMO detection • Institutional analyses of existing infrastructure and technical capacities • Infrastructure for conducting biosafety research, e.g. to determine the effects of LMOs on non-target species and the aggressiveness studies for LMOs compared to their non-LMO counterparts • Improved telecommunications and access to information communication technologies • Reliable Internet connectivity with the corresponding security mechanisms against viruses, hackers, etc • Infrastructure and office facilities to facilitate electronic networking, institutional inter-linkages and sharing of information between national administrative bodies and between countries • Upgrade of existing information infrastructure and capability • Identification and strengthening centres of excellence

d) Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for increased external project funding for biosafety • Funding to conduct food safety analyses • Financial assistance for biotechnology/ biosafety research • Funding for biosafety training courses • Sustainable financing mechanisms
e) Mechanisms for follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanism for monitoring of enforcement of the biosafety regulatory regimes • Competence in undertaking inspection and enforcement to ensure compliance with the biosafety regulatory regimes • Procedures and practices for enforcement of biosafety laws • Post-market monitoring of LMOs • Development of national requirements and guidelines for handling, transport, packaging and identification of LMOs • Enforcement actions required for handling, transport, use, transit and release of LMOs • Training and guidance materials for monitoring and enforcement of the biosafety regulatory regimes • Competence to monitor, enforce and report on compliance
2. Human resources development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of decision makers, scientists, administrative and technical staff on legal, scientific and technical matters • Scientific and technical expertise in fields relevant to risk assessment and risk management (e.g. molecular biology, population genetics, ecology, taxonomy, microbiology, virology, botany, zoology, biochemistry and entomology) • Social science expertise including management skills, law, economics and political science • Regulatory expertise including drafting of laws, law enforcement • Training guides and manuals • Training in information management • Overseas post-graduate training in biotechnology and biosafety • Training of quarantine staff in handling the LMO imports
3. Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence in undertaking risk assessment and risk management • Standard methods, techniques, standards and guidelines for risk assessment • Training and guidance material in risk assessment and risk management • Standardization of procedures and methodologies for risk assessment and risk management • Technical guidelines for risk assessment and risk management • Model test systems and experiment protocols for risk assessment • Technical parameters and methods to describe and measure the risk of LMOs • Establishment of risk assessment institutions • Access to available scientific data and information on risk assessment of LMOs • Basic research on risk assessment and risk management • Models for prediction and control of potential adverse effects of LMOs

4. Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific expertise for risk assessment • Technical means for monitoring LMOs in the field • Methodologies and procedures for post-release monitoring of environmental effects of LMOs • Examples of strategies for risk management • Protocols to address issues of gene flow • Analytical methods for tracing the transgenic traits in the field • Scientific capacity to examine the rationality of the transgenic constructs and the stability of the LMOs in field conditions • Post release monitoring systems • Application of risk monitoring principles • Strategies for prevention, control, handling of LMO effects • Emergency strategies and technical countermeasures for the control of the potential effects of LMOs • LMO monitoring protocols
5. Awareness, education and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured public awareness and education programs on biosafety • Ways to effectively communicate to the public about the national biosafety regulatory system and how it works • National systems for participation in decision making on LMOs • Mechanisms for easy public access to information on biosafety • Education and awareness materials on biosafety • National biosafety websites to communicate information • Training guide on public information and participation • Methodologies for public awareness and participation • Means of stakeholder and public consultation, including the private sector • Media training to promote public information on biosafety; skills in engaging the media • Methodologies for effective outreach regarding biosafety • Networks for public awareness through media, seminars, etc
6. Information exchange and data management, including participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channels for communication and information dissemination • Establishment or strengthening existing biosafety information exchange mechanisms • Creation and maintenance of national databases and information registries • Standards for producing and validating data related to LMOs to be entered in the Biosafety Clearing-House • Information technologies and training in their use • Mechanisms for data collection, analysis, storage and management • Information sharing mechanisms • Support for development of national nodes of the Biosafety Clearing-House where country information can be accessed • Support for translation of data and reports for submission to the Biosafety Clearing-House • Access to available scientific information and case-studies, through journals and Web-based resources

7. Scientific, Technical and institutional collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms for international cooperation and communication in biosafety • Mechanisms for exchange of experts at the national and regional levels • Opportunities for laboratory networking including the possibility of sharing facilities between neighboring countries • Regional networks for information exchange • Regional harmonization of legal, regulatory and administrative systems • Regional cooperation in risk assessment and harmonization of legal, regulatory and administrative systems and approaches • Scientific cooperation in the field biosafety (joint research, establishment of joint biosafety laboratory and scholar exchange) • Cooperating with other countries to strengthen and streamline regulatory frameworks, participate in international expert consultations and serve on international task forces
8. Technology transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling policies and incentives for technology transfer • Management of intellectual property rights • Technologies for risk assessment and monitoring of LMOs • Capability to handle the biosafety in terms of technology transfer and to absorb the technologies
9. Identification of LMOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods and systems for identification, detection and traceability of LMOs • LMO testing laboratories and equipment • Border control and LMO inspection facilities • Training of inspectors and customs officials in LMO identification systems • Ability to use analytical methods to detect and quantitatively assess the transgenic traits (e.g. polymerase chain reaction (PCR), enzyme-limited immunosorbent assay (ELISA) and other methods) • Testing or validation system to identify the presence or concentration of LMOs • Development of unique identification systems • Policy and guidelines on labeling of GM plant products • Documentation systems for LMO shipments • National systems for inspection of LMO shipments
10. Socio-economic considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and methods for risk-benefit analysis of LMOs • Skills for integration of socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding LMOs

Annex II

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND POSSIBLE REVISION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL

A. Introduction

1. The Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol was developed in 2002 by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and was endorsed in February 2004 by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties. At the time it was developed, a number of things were unclear. For example, the capacity needs of countries were not well understood and the coverage of the few then existing biosafety capacity-building projects was unknown. Since then, a number of developments have taken place. Many countries have assessed and submitted their needs and priorities to the Biosafety Clearing-House. As well, a number of capacity-building projects have been initiated and some operational experience gained.

2. In light of the new developments, it may be necessary to review and revise the Action Plan so that it is relevant to the prevailing circumstances and response to the needs and priorities of countries. It may also be important to take into account experience gained and the lessons learned.

B. Objectives of the review

3. The purpose of the review is to examine the way and the extent to which the Action Plan has been implemented, analyse the unmet needs and gaps, review the lessons learned and identify areas that need to be updated or streamlined. The ultimate objective is to ensure that the Action Plan is current, relevant and effective in providing a coherent framework for capacity-building efforts consistent with the needs and priorities of Parties and other Governments.

C. Process of collecting information to facilitate the review

4. The review will be based primarily on information provided by Parties and other Governments. Information submitted by relevant organizations will also be taken into account. A questionnaire will be used as the main tool for gathering the information. The Executive Secretary will design the questionnaire and send it to all Parties, Governments and relevant organizations. The questionnaire will be simple to complete and also easily accessible through the Biosafety Clearing-House. For example check-boxes and yes/no questions will be used. The preliminary set indicators for monitoring implementation of the Action Plan, which were adopted in decision BS-I/5 of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, will be used, as appropriate, in the design of the questionnaire.

5. Respondents will be invited to submit the completed questionnaire and any additional information to the Secretariat no later than six months prior to third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. In the preparation of their submissions, they will also be encouraged to use preliminary set indicators for monitoring implementation of the Action Plan.

6. The Executive Secretary will collaborate with organizations and initiatives which have in-country contacts and infrastructure, such as the UNEP-GEF projects, in order to assist countries in responding to the questionnaire so as to maximize the number and quality of responses.

D. Type of information needed to facilitate the review

7. Respondents will be invited to submit information particularly related to the following aspects:

(a) Overview of the progress made in implementing the Action Plan, including the extent of coverage of its different elements, the specific achievements made, the experience gained and the lessons learned;

(b) Elements of the Action Plan successfully implemented and consequently considered to be secondary priorities;

(c) The gaps/weaknesses in the implementation of the Action Plan elements;

(d) The unmet and emerging needs and priorities requiring urgent attention;

(e) The main limitations and constraints encountered;

(f) Existing opportunities that could be taken into account while reviewing the Action Plan;

(g) Views on the relevance of the different components of the current Action Plan in relation to the needs and priorities of countries;

(h) Suggestions on the desired revisions and improvements to the Action Plan, including elements, processes and activities of the current Action Plan should be removed or modified, and why, and new ones that should be added;

(i) Suggestions of measures to improve the delivery of capacity-building initiatives and to enhance their effectiveness in responding to the needs and priorities of countries.

E. Expected outcomes of the review

8. The main outcome of the review process prior to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the protocol will be a background paper prepared by the Executive Secretary, on the basis of the above-mentioned submissions, outlining strategic recommendations to be taken into account in the possible revision of the Action Plan in order to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness and sustainability of capacity-building measures.

9. Depending on the submissions received, the Executive Secretary may prepare a draft revised Action Plan for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its third meeting.
