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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

Third meeting

Curitiba, Brazil, 13–17 March 2006

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

STATUS OF CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Report on the progress in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

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 and a coordination mechanism for its implementation. In paragraph 5 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol agreed to undertake a comprehensive review and possible revision of the Action Plan at its third meeting.

2. At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol adopted decision BS-II/3, in which it adopted, *inter alia*, terms of reference for the comprehensive review of the Action Plan and outlined a process to facilitate the review and possible revision of the Action Plan at the third meeting (decision BS-II/3, paragraphs 24-31 and annex). In this regard Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations were invited to submit to the Secretariat information on progress made in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan as well as views and suggestions on desired revisions to the Action Plan. The Executive Secretary was requested to develop a questionnaire to facilitate the submission of the above-mentioned information and to prepare, on the basis of the submissions received, a background paper describing, *inter alia*, the progress in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan, the unmet needs/gaps and strategic recommendations to be taken into account in the possible revision of the Action Plan. The Executive Secretary was also requested to prepare, depending on the outcome of the review, a draft revised Action Plan for consideration at the third meeting.

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3. The present note contains a synthesis report on the progress in, and effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan, including the experience gained and the lessons learned as well as the main limitations and constraints encountered. Section II describes the methodology that that was used in the review. Section III summarizes the overall status in the implementation of the various elements and processes outlined in the Action Plan and the main capacity-building initiatives or activities that have contributed to each element. It also reviews the effectiveness of the Action Plan, i.e. the extent to which the objectives and the desired results/ outcomes of the Action Plan have been achieved. ^{1/} Section IV outlines the main constraints and limitations encountered as well as the major gaps/ unmet needs. It also highlights possible measures that could be taken to address the unmet needs and gaps. ^{2/} In accordance with paragraph 28 of decision BS-II/ 3, section V discusses the experience and constraints encountered with the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism based on the submissions received from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations. Section VI presents the conclusion and recommendations. Elements of a possible decision for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol are outlined in section VII.

II. THE METHODOLOGY USED IN THE REVIEW

4. Pursuant to decision BS-II/3, paragraph 26, the Executive Secretary prepared a questionnaire for the review of the Action Plan with input from members of the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building for Biosafety. The questionnaire was sent out to all Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations on 16 September 2005. It included questions relating to the issues specified in the terms of reference for the review of the Action Plan (contained in the annex to decision BS-II/3). A copy of the questionnaire, including a summary of the statistical results, is contained in an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/INF/4). As of 15 January 2006, the Secretariat had received a total of 46 responses, including 42 from Governments (37 Parties to the Protocol and 5 non-Parties) and four from organizations. ^{3/} Of the 42 Government responses, 31 were from developing countries or countries with economies in transition and 11 were from developed countries.

5. In addition, the Executive Secretary reviewed relevant information from the interim national reports on implementation of the Protocol as well as information submitted to the capacity-building databases in the Biosafety Clearing-House. The common format for the interim reports included four specific questions on Article 22 of the Protocol (capacity-building) and a number of other questions relevant to the review of the Action Plan. A total of 44 interim reports were submitted, as at 11 October 2005, of which 27 were from developing country Parties and 17 were from developed country Parties. A detailed analysis of information from the interim national reports has been prepared for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/12 and UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/INF/8).

6. Furthermore, in accordance with decisions BS-I/5, paragraph 15 and BS-II/3, paragraph 29, results from other relevant assessments and reports were also considered in the review. These included the evaluation of the support to the Protocol provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which was

^{1/} Capacity-building results, as used in the context of this note, refer to the immediate and direct consequences of capacity-building activities and projects implemented in support of the Action Plan.

^{2/} 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.

^{3/} The Parties included: six from Africa (i.e. Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan and Zimbabwe); 8 from the Asia-Pacific (i.e. Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Iran, Japan, Lao PDR, Tajikistan and Thailand), ten from Central and Eastern Europe (i.e. Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova (Republic of), Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia); three from Latin America and the Caribbean (i.e. Belize, Cuba and Mexico); and nine from the Western Europe and Others Group (Austria, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom). The non-Parties were: Bosnia Herzegovina, Chad, Gabon, Guinea and the United States of America. The organizations were: the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University (UNU), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Public Research and Regulation Organization and the Global Industry Coalition.

carried out by the GEF Office of Monitoring and Evaluation, ^{4/} as well the draft report on the assessment of ongoing efforts to build capacity for biotechnology and biosafety carried out by the UNU Institute of Advanced Studies.

7. It should be noted that the analysis and some of the conclusions drawn in this note are based on a fairly small sample of countries and organizations. In addition, the geographical distribution of the responses to the questionnaire, as indicated in paragraph 5, was uneven. For example, only three responses were received from the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Accordingly, the results of the review, in particular the statistical figures presented in the note, should be interpreted taking into account the above-mentioned limitations.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRESS IN, AND EFFECTIVENESS OF, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

8. This section describes the overall status and progress in, and the effectiveness of, the implementation of the Action Plan. The analysis is divided into three sub-sections. The first sub-section describes the status and progress in implementing the key elements of the Action Plan (part 2 of the Action Plan and their corresponding activities (outlined in part 4 of the Action Plan); the second describes the progress in implementing the key processes/steps (i.e. part 3 of the Action Plan) and the third sub-section describes the effectiveness of the Action Plan.

A. The status and progress in the implementation of the elements of the Action Plan

9. This sub-section describes the extent of implementation of the different elements of the Action Plan and the level of progress towards achieving the desired capacity-building outcomes under each element (based on the criteria and indicators that were adopted in decision BS-I/5, annex V). It also provides illustrative examples of key initiatives that have contributed to implementation of each element.

1. Institutional capacity-building

10. In response to the Action Plan review questionnaire (referred to hereafter simply as “the questionnaire”), a number of countries reported that some progress had been made towards building institutional capacities for the effective implementation of the Protocol. For example, out of the 31 developing countries and countries with economies in transition that responded to the questionnaire, 8 countries (26%) ^{5/} reported that they had established biosafety regulatory frameworks (including policies, laws and regulations), 13 countries (42%) had done so a large extent, ^{6/} 8 countries (26%) had done so to some extent and 1 country (3%) said no progress had been made in this regard. This is largely attributed to the UNEP-GEF project on development of national biosafety frameworks (NBFs) which has assisted more than 133 countries to develop their NBFs, out of which 58 countries had, as of 31 January 2006, completed their drafts. ^{7/}

^{4/} A copy of the first draft report of the evaluation can be accessed from the GEF website at: http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Council_Documents/GEF_C27/documents/C.27.ME.Inf.1.Rev.1BiosafetyEvaluation.pdf

^{5/} It should be noted that the percentages used in section III are calculated based on the total number of developing countries and countries with economies in transition that responded to the questionnaire (31 countries) or those that submitted their interim national reports (27 countries), unless otherwise indicated.

^{6/} In the context of this Action Plan review, the term “to a large extent” was used to refer to a situation whereby more than 50% of the desired result was achieved and “to a limited or some extent” referred to a situation whereby less than 50% of the desired result was achieved.

^{7/} The list of countries that have completed their NBFs under the UNEP-GEF project can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.unep.ch/biosafety/news.htm#nbf>

11. A number of countries (9 responses or 29%) reported that they had established institutional mechanisms for administering biosafety, 11 countries (36%) had done so to a large extent, 8 countries (26%) had made some progress and 2 countries (7%) said no progress had been made. Several countries have designated Competent National Authorities and some have established specific departments or units within relevant ministries or semi-autonomous institutions to address biosafety issues. Most countries (29 responses or 94%) also reported that they had established national biosafety committees or similar inter-institutional bodies to coordinate biosafety issues. Some countries said they had established or were in the process of establishing mechanisms for handling notifications or requests for release of living modified organisms into the environment as well as systems for managing biosafety records.

12. In terms of infrastructure, 5 countries (16%) reported that they had adequate and reliable office equipment and facilities, 9 countries (29%) had acquired the required equipment to a large extent and 10 countries (32%) to some extent. Seventeen countries (55%) also said they had reliable or largely reliable telecommunication infrastructure including Internet access. However, most countries (21 responses or 68%) lacked facilities for biosafety research (e.g. laboratories and greenhouses, etc) and equipment for the detection and analysis of living modified organisms. Only 1 country (3%) said it had such facilities and equipment and 7 countries (23%), especially those participating in the GEF-funded demonstration projects on implementation of national biosafety frameworks, said they had acquired or strengthened them to a large extent. At least 15 countries (48%) also reported that they had established, or had to a large extent established, systems (including guidelines and procedures) for enforcement and monitoring of environmental impacts of living modified organisms as well as systems for inspections of activities.

13. Regarding funding and resource management, many the countries (18 responses or 58%) reported that they did not have, or had received a limited amount of, the required funding for biosafety activities. Only one country (3%) said it had received the desired funding for biosafety and 9 countries (29%) said they had the required funding for biosafety to a large extent. Most of the funding for biosafety activities comes from external assistance. Only 8 countries (26%) reported that their funding for biosafety comes largely from the national budgetary allocation. Many countries (12 responses or 39%) said their biosafety funding comes from the national budget only to some extent and 8 countries (26%) said their biosafety activities are not covered in the national budgets. Most of the developing countries and countries with economies in transition (27 responses or 87%) reported that they used external funding and technical assistance in implementing their biosafety capacity-building activities. The draft assessment report prepared by the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies showed that the total funding assistance for biosafety capacity building currently stands at more than US\$ 179,400,000. ^{8/} Most of the financial assistance for biosafety has been provided by the Global Environment Facility (\$55.079 million). Also a few developed countries, including: Denmark, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America, have provided sizeable bilateral support for biosafety. ^{9/}

14. Several initiatives have assisted countries to build their institutional capacities in biosafety. According to the information available in the Biosafety Clearing-House, at least 78 out of a total of 119 (66%) completed and ongoing projects have specifically contributed to institutional capacity-building. Major examples include the: the GEF-funded biosafety projects; the project funded by the Netherlands on

^{8/} It should be noted that this figure includes some initiatives that are listed as biosafety projects (e.g. the CIDA-funded NEPAD Biosciences project and the Sida-funded BIO-EARN programme) but also incorporate components on biotechnology. It is sometimes difficult to disaggregate the figures to identify what is spent on biosafety and what is spent more broadly on biotechnology capacity development.

^{9/} The assessment noted that more than 90% of the funding for biosafety so far is provided through following projects: the GEF-funded projects, including co-financing (\$95.5), CIDA-funded Biosciences in Eastern and Central Africa project (\$25M), USAID-funded Programme for Biosafety Systems (14.8M), the Sida-funded BIO-EARN programme (\$13.3M), Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology (\$11.9M), the Norad-funded Gateways Institutes of Gene Ecology/Biosafety Capacity Building Programme (\$2.9M), the German Support of the African Union in Matters of Biosafety (\$2.7M) and the Japan-funded project on Capacity Building in Biosafety of GM Crops in Asia which is implemented by FAO (1.1M).

the implementation of national biosafety frameworks in pre-accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe (2001-2003); the EU-PHARE twinning projects; the German Biosafety Capacity-Building Initiative; and the programme for biosafety systems (PBS) funded by the United States of America.

15. While progress has been made in some countries towards building institutional capacities in biosafety, it is clear from the above analysis that a lot more still needs to be done, especially with regard to the establishment of facilities for biosafety research and for the detection and analysis of living modified organisms. There is also a need for Governments to provide for biosafety activities in the national budgetary allocations.

2. *Human-resources development and training*

16. With regard to human resources development in biosafety, some progress has been made in many countries. In response to the questionnaire, 7 countries (23%) indicated that they had, to a large extent, acquired the desired number of national experts in different biosafety-related fields, 19 countries (61%) said they had trained some of the required experts and 4 countries (13%) said they had no experts in biosafety. At least 5 countries (16%) mentioned that they had used local experts in undertaking activities related to the implementation of the Protocol at the national level, 8 countries (26%) had done so to a large extent and 14 countries (45%) had done so to some extent. Only 2 countries (7%) said they had not used local experts.

17. In their interim national reports, 15 developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition (56%) indicated that they benefited from cooperation in biosafety technical and scientific training and in the proper and safe management of biotechnology to the extent that it is required for biosafety. Most of them made reference to the training received through the GEF-funded projects. However all of them, except one, indicated that their needs in this regard were only partially met.

18. According to the information available in the Biosafety Clearing-House, at least 95 projects (80%) have specifically contributed to human-resources development and training in various biosafety-related fields through training workshops and international biosafety courses, on-job training and staff exchanges and, provision of scholarships and fellowships. Examples of the main initiatives include: the GEF-funded biosafety projects through which over 1,500 people have been trained in areas such as regulatory systems and risk assessment; the ICGEB biosafety programme which has trained over 900 scientists from more than 80 countries mainly in risk assessment and risk management; the Sida-funded BIO-EARN programme which has trained 17 PhD students in agricultural, environmental and industrial biotechnology and six MSc students in biosafety research, of which three proceeded for PhD studies; the UNIDO Diploma in Biosafety course which has trained more than 100 experts in multi-disciplinary biosafety skills; the one-year training course in Development-Oriented Plant Biotechnology and Biosafety offered by InWEnt Capacity Building International, which sponsors 40 participants each year; and the annual international two-week biosafety course offered since 2003 by the Norwegian Institute of Gene Ecology, which has trained more than 110 experts. Several universities and other organizations have also developed formal short-term and long-term training programmes in biosafety. ^{10/}

19. It is apparent from the above analysis that some progress has been made in the implementation of the Action Plan element on human-resources development and training. However, more effort is needed. In particular, many countries expressed a need for more expertise in risk assessment, risk management, detection and identification of living modified organisms and the monitoring of their environmental effects, as well as in regulatory implementation and enforcement.

^{10/} At least 44 ongoing biosafety courses are registered the Compendium of Biosafety-Related Training and Education Programmes available through the Biosafety Clearing-House: <http://bch.biodiv.org/capacitybuilding/programmes.shtml>

3. *Risk assessment and other scientific and technical expertise*

20. Some progress has been made in building capacity for risk assessment, as partly demonstrated by the growing number of risk assessments and biosafety research activities being carried out in developing countries and countries with economies in transition by local experts. In response to the questionnaire, at least 10 countries (32%) reported that risk assessments and biosafety research were, to a large extent, being carried out locally and another 10 countries (32%) said this was being done to a limited extent. Only 9 countries (29%) said no risk assessments or biosafety research were being undertaken locally. ^{11/} Moreover, at least 4 countries (13%) reported that local experts were being used in undertaking or reviewing risk assessments, 10 countries (32%) said local experts were being used to a large extent and 6 countries (19%) said they were being used to some extent. Only 8 countries (26%) said local expert were not being used.

21. In their interim national reports, 14 developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition (52%) reported that they had benefited from cooperation for technical and scientific training in the use of risk assessment and risk management for biosafety but indicated that their needs were only partially met and 6 countries (22%) said they had not benefited from such cooperation and their needs remained unmet.

22. According to the information in the Biosafety Clearing-House projects database, at least 53 of the completed and ongoing projects (45%) have specifically contributed to capacity-building in risk assessment. Examples include the following: the GEF-funded projects on the development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks; the United States-funded Programme for Biosafety Systems; the International Project on GMO Environmental Risk Assessment Methodologies (GMO-ERA), the FAO-supported Asia regional project and the national projects in Grenada and Malaysia, the Biosafety Programme of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology and the Danish-funded project on Capacity Building for Biosafety and Ecological Risk Assessment in East Africa – BiosafeTrain.

23. While some progress has been made in building risk assessment capacity and other scientific and technical expertise, more effort is clearly needed. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment, which met from 15 to 18 November 2005 in Rome, identified a number of specific areas where limitations in capacity may be an impediment to effective implementation of the risk assessment provisions of the Protocol at national level. Concerted effort is needed to address those limitations. ^{12/} The GEF Evaluation Report also noted that capacity development in risk assessment and risk management under the GEF-funded projects was primarily of a general or introductory nature. There is need to assist relevant officials from developing countries to acquire in-depth training and practical experience in risk assessment and other relevant scientific and technical expertise.

4. *Risk management*

24. In response to the questionnaire, 6 developing countries and countries with economies in transition (19%) reported that they had established, to a large extent, risk management strategies for living modified organisms with identified risks, 13 countries (42%) said they had done so to some extent and 9 countries (29%) said they had not done so. These results correspond with the information submitted in the interim national reports in which 17 Parties (63%) reported that they had established appropriate

^{11/} It should be noted, as mentioned in the evaluation GEF's support to the Protocol, that the low levels in undertaking risk assessments may not be an indication of lack of capacity but rather an indicator that some countries have not yet engaged in biotechnology or have not received any applications.

^{12/} Examples of key limitations to capacity-building in risk assessment are summarized in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/9 (paragraphs 32-33) and in the report of the meeting (document: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/INF/1).

mechanisms, measures and strategies to regulate, manage and control risks identified in the risk assessment provisions of the Protocol (Article 16.1). Also, 17 countries reported that they adopted appropriate measures to prevent unintentional transboundary movements of living modified organisms (Article 16.3).

25. Currently there are 22 projects (19%) are registered in the Biosafety Clearing-House, as specifically contributing to building capacities in risk management. Examples include: the FAO Regional Project on Capacity Building in Biosafety of GM Crops in Asia and the GEF-funded demonstration projects on implementation of national biosafety frameworks.

26. It is clear from the above analysis that limited progress has been made in the implementation of this element of the Action Plan. More projects and assistance programmes are needed specifically to assist countries to strengthen their capacities in risk management.

5. *Awareness, participation and education*

27. Progress has been made with regard to promoting awareness, participation and education at all levels regarding biosafety issues in general, and the Biosafety Protocol in particular. In response to the questionnaire, 14 countries (45%) reported that the desired level of public awareness of the Protocol had been realized to a large extent, 13 countries (42%) said it had been realized to some extent and 3 countries (10%) said the desired level of awareness had not been realized. With regard to the desired level of stakeholder involvement in decision-making and in the development and implementation of national biodiversity frameworks identical responses were made.

28. On the other hand, in their interim national reports, some developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition (8 responses or 30%) reported that they have promoted and facilitated public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms to a large extent. The majority (18 Parties or 66%) reported that they had done so to some extent and only 1 Party (4%) said it had not done so.

29. A number of projects (61 records or 51%) have specifically contributed to promoting public awareness, participation and education in biosafety. Examples include: the GEF-funded biosafety projects ^{13/} and the German-funded project on civil society participation in Algeria's biosafety process implemented by Association de Reflexion, d'Echanges et d'Actions pour l'Environnement et le Développement (AREA-ED), a non-governmental organization.

30. While some progress has been made in promoting awareness, participation and education, further effort is needed given the fact that biotechnology and biosafety issues are relatively new and, in some countries, very controversial. The evaluation report of GEF support for the Protocol highlighted a need for heightened awareness of biosafety issues, particularly among parliamentarians and other policy makers, and a need for measures to facilitate effective public involvement.

^{13/} The GEF biosafety projects have assisted more than 150 countries to organize awareness workshops and to develop, as part of the national biosafety frameworks, systems for public participation and information. At least 22 countries (Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mexico, Namibia, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Ukraine and Yemen) have also established national biosafety websites to facilitate public outreach efforts and public access to biosafety information.

participated to a large extent, 16 countries (52%) participated to some extent while 8 countries (26%) said they had not participated in such initiatives.

36. In the interim national reports, 18 developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition (50%) reported that they have cooperated with other Parties in the building capacities for biosafety (Article 22.1 of the Protocol). A few Parties (7 responses or 17%) reported they had cooperated to a large extent with other States and international bodies in promoting and facilitating public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (Article 23.1(a)). The majority (28 Parties or 66%) said they had done only to a limited extent and 7 Parties (17%) said they had not done so. With regard to cooperation between Parties for the purposes of identifying living modified organisms that may have adverse effects on biodiversity and human health and in taking appropriate measures (Article 16.5), 11 Parties (41%) said they had done so and 14 Parties (52%) said they had not done so. One Party stated it had not done so because there was no circumstance that called for such cooperation.

37. Scientific, technical and institutional collaboration has taken place in different ways, including through multi-lateral and bilateral financial and technical assistance. ^{18/} A few developed countries have provided bilateral financial and technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition through different projects and activities. ^{19/} Some developed countries have provided experts to provide technical advice to other countries or to serve as resource persons at training workshops. For example many countries from the Central and Eastern Europe region (including: Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia) reported that they have benefited from the technical assistance and cooperation provided through the European Union twinning projects.

38. South-South cooperation in biosafety has also taken place in few cases. At least four countries (14%) that responded to the questionnaire indicated that they had engaged to a large extent in mechanisms and activities for promoting south-south cooperation in biosafety and eight countries had done so to some extent. For example, Mexico reported that its experts provided training to members of the Biosafety Committee in Nicaragua, Paraguay and Guatemala and also participated in the review of the Nicaraguan and Peruvian national biosafety frameworks. Cuba also reported its biosafety specialists provided advice to the competent authorities of Bolivia and Paraguay. Similarly, Poland reported that Polish experts participated in bilateral workshops in Bulgaria.

39. Scientific, technical and institutional collaboration on biosafety is also taking place through initiative and programmes developed by regional and subregional organizations. The include:

(a) Examples from Africa include: the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) regional strategy and advisory panel on biotechnology and biosafety; the Southern African Development Community (SADC) common biosafety policy and regulatory system and; the biosafety programmes of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA) and West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF);

(b) Example from Asia include: the initiative of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries to ensure the safe cross-border movement and use of agriculture-related

^{18/} Some developed countries specifically referred to their financial contributions to the Global Environment Facility, which is supporting a number of biosafety projects, and to their support through the trust funds for the Protocol for enabling developing countries' participation in biosafety meetings. Others mentioned the biosafety meeting they sponsored and hosted.

^{19/} Some of the countries that have provided bilateral assistance for biosafety (based on the information in the interim reports and in the BCH projects database) include: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United States of America.

genetically modified organisms through harmonization of national biosafety regulations; ^{20/} the regional framework for biosafety procedures and protocols developed by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries ^{21/} and; the strategy of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member economies to encourage technical cooperation in strengthening regulatory capacity and exchanging technical information for the safe introduction and use of agricultural biotechnology products; ^{22/}

(c) Examples in Latin America include: the Organization of American States (OAS) project on Biosafety Regulations in Latin America and the Caribbean within the framework of the Biosafety Protocol; ^{23/} the REDBIO/FAO Technical Cooperation Network on Plant Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean which is promoting information exchange and training plant biotechnology and biosafety; ^{24/} and the Interamerican Institute of Agricultural Cooperation (i.e. Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación con la Agricultura, IICA) work programme to implement resolution 381 on biotechnology and biosafety adopted by the Inter-American Agricultural Meeting (Junta Interamericana en Agricultura) in 2003 to promote cooperation on biosafety among the Central American countries;

(d) Examples from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) include: the CEE Steering Committee on Biosafety, which was established under the Netherlands-funded Social Transformation (MATRA) Programme on implementation of biosafety frameworks in pre-accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

40. In general, some progress has been made in promoting scientific, technical and institutional collaboration in biosafety. However, more effort is needed including: organization of regional and subregional workshops, bilateral exchanges of technical experts, development of regional websites and databases and strengthening of regional “centres of excellence” for biosafety. Furthermore, the evaluation report on GEF support for the Protocol also noted that no subregional harmonization of scientific, legal and regulatory instruments has taken place, except in the European Union accession countries. Further efforts may be required in this regard.

8. *Technology transfer*

41. Limited progress was reported with regard to the transfer of technology and know-how related to biosafety. Only two countries (7%) reported that the desired technologies had been transferred to a large extent. The majority (13 responses or 42%) indicated that this had been done only to some extent and 11 countries (36%) said no transfer had occurred. At least six countries (19%) reported that they had, to a large extent, put in place enabling frameworks for technology transfer, 10 countries (32%) said such frameworks were in place to some extent and the majority (12 responses or 39%) said no such frameworks were in place. Three countries did not respond to this question.

42. Few projects (20 records or 17%) are registered in the Biosafety Clearing-House as having contributed to the transfer of technology and know-how in biosafety. The specific activities reported range from the provision of research equipment and materials and technical tools such as computer

^{20/} At a workshop on national biosafety frameworks, regional cooperation and information sharing (14-15 June 2004; Manila, Philippines) ASEAN countries agreed to further cooperate in the development of biosafety regulations, sharing of information on biosafety through the BCH and to establish a regional information network on biosafety.

^{21/} Member countries of SAARC are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Details are available at: <http://www.saarc-sec.org/main.php?t=2.7>.

^{22/} Further details about APEC’s biosafety and biotechnology activities can be accessed at: http://www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/other_apec_groups/agricultural_biotechnology.html.

^{23/} See details about the OAS project at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/database/record.aspx?id=5661>.

^{24/} Details about REDBIO/FAO network are available at: <http://www.redbio.cl/default.asp>.

software, to the diffusion of scientific knowledge and technical know-how through technical training, fellowships and staff exchanges.

43. Examples of projects that have made a contribution in this regard include: the Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology Programme which has established partnerships between Indian and Swiss institutions and private; the twinning projects through which some European Union countries have assisted countries in Central and Eastern Europe to develop national biosafety systems comparable with European Union standards including through equipping laboratories and other facilities; and the Canadian-funded NEPAD Biosciences Facility for Eastern and Central Africa, which aims at providing African researchers access to state-of-the-art biosciences and technologies as well as related scientific services and training.

9. Identification of living modified organisms

44. A few developing countries and countries with economies in transition reported that some progress had been made in building capacities for identification of living modified organisms. For example, only 3 countries (10%) indicated that national systems and measures for identification of shipments of living modified organisms were in place, 5 countries (16%) said they were in place to a large extent and 9 countries (29%) said they were in place to some extent. Ten countries (32%) said identification systems were not in place and four countries (14%) did not answer the question. Identical responses were made with regard to the use of modern techniques for identification of living modified organisms.

45. This element of the Action Plan had the least number of projects (10 records or 8%) registered in the Biosafety Clearing-House as contributing to its implementation. Examples include: the FAO Initiative on capacity building for detection genetically modified organisms in seed; ^{25/} and the Biosafety Institute for Genetically Modified Agricultural Products (BIGMAP) programme of Iowa State University, which is devoted to developing tools and methods for science-based evaluation of the risks and benefits of genetically modified agricultural products. ^{26/}

46. Overall, limited progress has been made in building capacities for identification of living modified organisms. ^{27/} A lot more needs to be done in this regard, including assisting countries in acquiring equipment and skills for the detection and testing of living modified organisms, establishing national identification systems and procedures (including standard testing protocols) and training of customs officials in documentation systems for shipments of living modified organisms.

10. Socio-economic considerations

47. Few countries reported on the progress in building capacities for addressing socio-economic considerations regarding living modified organisms. Among these, five countries (16%), indicated that capacity in this area had been built to a large extent, eight countries (26%) said it had been built to some extent and three countries said no capacity has been built. The majority of countries did not respond to this question, which probably implies that they lacked capacity in this area.

B. Progress in the implementation of the processes and activities of the Action Plan

48. *Identification of capacity-building needs:* In response to the request contained in decision BS-I/5, paragraph 6, and in the Action Plan, at least 53 countries had, as of 15 December 2005, submitted

^{25/} See details about the initiative at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/database/record.aspx?id=9010>.

^{26/} Further details about BIGMAP can be accessed at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/database/record.aspx?id=5853>

^{27/} It should be noted that most of the countries that reported progress in this regard were countries from Central and Eastern Europe that have acceded to the European Union.

information to the Biosafety Clearing-House regarding their capacity-building needs and priorities. The biosafety capacity-building needs of countries have also been documented in various other reports. Examples include: Inventories of the status and gaps in technological and legal capacities which were carried out under the UNEP-GEF project on development of national biosafety frameworks ^{28/} and the FAO Benchmark Document on the Needs and Present Status of the Capacity Building in Biosafety of GM Crops in Asia (2004). ^{29/} The Evaluation Report of the GEF's support for biosafety, however, noted that the UNEP-GEF project on the development of national biosafety frameworks was not adequately designed and funded to fully take the complexities of local conditions and needs into account.

49. *Prioritization of the key elements by each country:* In its decisions BS-I/5, paragraph 8, and BS-II/3, paragraph 19, Parties and other Governments were invited to develop national strategies for capacity-building in biosafety, prioritizing their needs for capacity-building activities, in order to facilitate a proactive, systematic and coordinated approach addressing the identified needs. However, no information has been received regarding the progress made in developing national strategies for capacity-building in biosafety.

50. *Identification of the coverage and gaps in capacity-building initiatives and resources:* Two analyses of the coverage and gaps in the implementation of the Action Plan, have so far been undertaken at the global level by the Executive Secretary and presented in two documents: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/1/6 and UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7. At the country level, some countries that participated in the UNEP-GEF project on development of national biosafety frameworks prepared inventories of the coverage and gaps of existing capacity-building programmes. However, very few countries have made those inventories available to the Biosafety Clearing-House. As such it was not possible to assess the level progress made in the implementation of this process at the country level.

51. *Enhancement of the effectiveness and adequacy of financial assistance:* In the response to the questionnaire, 10 developed countries indicated that they made financial resources available to other Parties and 25 countries indicated that they received external financial assistance in the implementation of their biosafety capacity-building activities. However, many also indicated that the assistance received was inadequate. ^{30/}

52. *Enhancement of synergies and coordination of capacity-building initiatives:* Some progress has been made in implementing this process at the global level through the Coordination Mechanism. For example, capacity-building databases (i.e. for long-term projects, short-term opportunities, country capacity needs and for the compendium of biosafety courses) as well as Biosafety Information Resource Centre have been established in the Biosafety Clearing-House and two coordination meetings held. ^{31/} At the country level, 24 countries (57%) indicated that they had established mechanisms to coordinate biosafety capacity-building activities ^{32/} and 16 countries (38%) said they had not established such mechanisms. However, there is limited information to assess if synergies have been realized in practice.

53. *Development of indicators for evaluating capacity-building measures:* In its decision BS-I/5, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol adopted preliminary criteria

^{28/} Inventories of some countries are posted as separate documents, or as components of the national biosafety framework reports, on the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit website at: <http://www.unep.ch/biosafety/parcountrieslist.htm>

^{29/} A copy of the FAO benchmark report can be accessed at: <http://asiabionet.org/documents/benchmark.htm>

^{30/} In the note UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7, the Executive Secretary proposed a number of options for enhancing the effectiveness and adequacy of financial assistance for biosafety.

^{31/} A progress report on the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism was considered at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (document: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/4).

^{32/} Several countries mentioned that coordination is done through the Competent National Authorities, national biosafety committees and/or the National Coordinating Committees established under the UNEP-GEF project.

and indicators for monitoring implementation of the Action Plan. Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations were invited to use them, as appropriate, to monitor their biosafety capacity-building initiatives and submit to the Executive Secretary their experience in using them. The report on the operational experience in using the indicators will be considered at the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

54. Overall, progress has been made to implement the processes specified in part 3 of the Action Plan. However, further effort is required particularly with regard the development of national strategies for capacity-building in biosafety, the enhancement of the effectiveness and adequacy of financial assistance and the enhancement of synergies and coordination of capacity-building initiatives at the country level.

C. Effectiveness of the implementation of the Action Plan

55. The Action Plan has to a large extent been effective in terms of providing a framework for guiding and facilitating efforts towards the development and strengthening of capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Biosafety Protocol at the national, sub regional, regional and global levels. ^{33/} Many Governments and organizations (31 responses or 67%) indicated that the Action Plan had influenced or guided their capacity-building activities and/or their financial and technical assistance for the implementation of the Protocol. For example, one respondent said the elements and steps specified in the Action Plan were useful as a starting point in planning national capacity-building efforts. Another respondent said the Action Plan guided its decisions on which capacity building areas and issues to focus its financial and technical assistance. A compilation of the specific comments made by Governments and organizations is contained in an information document: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/INF/4.

56. The Action Plan has also been fairly effective in terms of facilitating the realization of capacity-building results. Some of the projects and activities initiated in support of the Action Plan have resulted in concrete capacity-building outcomes and impacts. ^{34/} The include: the development of national biosafety frameworks by several countries, the establishment of national institutional mechanisms for addressing biosafety issues, the increase in public awareness of the Protocol and the increase in the number of biosafety training activities.

57. The implementation of Action Plan processes/steps is to some extent facilitating a more systematic and coordinated approach to capacity-building efforts at different levels. For example, the identification of needs and priorities by countries and the sharing of this information through the Biosafety Clearing-House are enabling donor Governments and organizations to target their assistance towards country-defined priority needs. ^{35/}

58. Furthermore, the Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the Action Plan has facilitated increased access to information regarding existing capacity-building projects, short-term opportunities and biosafety resource materials. The information in the capacity-building databases has also enabled Governments and organizations to identification of the coverage of existing initiatives and assistance programmes thus helping them to identify and minimize overlaps and duplication of efforts and to address inadvertent gaps. As well, the coordination meetings are providing a useful forum through which participants from Governments and organizations implementing or funding biosafety

^{33/} Effectiveness as used in this context refers to the extent to which the implementation of the Action Plan has succeeded in achieving its objective and the desired capacity-building results/ outcomes.

^{34/} As reflected in responses to the questionnaire, some donor countries and organizations have used the Action Plan as the basis for developing their biosafety projects or assistance programmes.

^{35/} At least 53 developing countries and countries with economies in transition had submitted their capacity-building needs and priorities the Biosafety Clearing-House (<http://bch.biodiv.org/capacitybuilding/capacityneeds.shtml>).

capacity-building activities are sharing practical experiences and lessons learned and exchanging views on how to improve the delivery, coordination and effectiveness of their initiatives.

IV. CAPACITY-BUILDING NEEDS, GAPS AND CONSTRAINTS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ACTION PLAN

59. In their interim national reports, 14 developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition (52%) reported that their capacity-building needs have been partially met, largely through participation in the GEF-funded projects, and 6 Parties (22%) reported that their capacity-building needs remain unmet. In other words, biosafety capacity-building needs of more than 74% of the developing countries and countries with economies in transition remain unmet.

60. A synthesis report on the needs and priorities submitted by countries to the Biosafety Clearing-House was presented to the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in documents: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/4 and UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/INF/7. ^{36/} In response to the questionnaire, a number of countries also identified the following unmet needs, many of which overlapped with those identified in the above-mentioned documents.

(a) Institutional capacity needs, including: laboratories, greenhouses and other facilities for biosafety research; reference laboratories for the detection and quantitative analysis of living modified organisms; systems inspection and monitoring of the environmental impacts of living modified organisms; and documentation systems for shipments of living modified organisms;

(b) Regulatory capacity needs, including: detailed regulations or guidelines to facilitate enforcement of biosafety laws and resources to operationalize administrative systems defined in the national biosafety frameworks; ^{37/}

(c) Human resources development needs, including training in key scientific and technical areas including: risk assessment and management, detection and analysis of living modified organisms, evaluation of the extent and effects of gene flow, and molecular biology skills (including: gene isolation, sequencing etc). As well, many countries expressed the need for training in legal drafting and policy analysis, assessment of trade impacts of biosafety-related measures, cost-benefit analysis, bioethics, and skills in assessment and integration of socio-economic considerations in decision-making;

(d) Risk assessment, risk management and other technical expertise needs, including: guidance materials on risk assessment and risk management, support to undertake biosafety research, tools for post-release monitoring of living modified organisms, inspection procedures and control measures, access to available information on risk assessments, biosafety research data and case-studies;

(e) Awareness, education and public participation needs, including: access to biosafety awareness materials, support to organize biosafety workshops and other awareness programmes and mechanisms to ensure easy public access to available biosafety information;

(f) Information exchange needs, including: support to establish national nodes of the Biosafety Clearing-House or national biosafety websites and databases and develop national capabilities to access and use the Biosafety Clearing-House;

^{36/} The documents can be accessed at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-02>.

^{37/} Although a number of countries have developed national biosafety frameworks through the support provided by the GEF, many have not yet officially adopted them and in some cases where they been adopted, the necessary regulations or guidelines and resources to operationalize or enforce them are not yet in place.

(g) Scientific, technical and institutional collaboration needs, including: mechanisms for exchange of experts at the subregional and regional levels, regional networks for information exchange, centres of excellence for scientific cooperation in biosafety research, regional joint capacity-building initiatives and, regional nodes for the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(h) Support for calculation and assessment of cost-benefit analysis and for the review of ethical considerations of living modified organisms.

61. While a few countries have submitted their capacity-building needs to the Biosafety Clearing-House, using the questionnaire that was developed by the Executive Secretary, some of the needs were expressed in general terms and some were not prioritized. Also some of the records have not been updated. It would be useful for all countries to periodically undertake thorough and systematic self-needs assessments involving all relevant stakeholders in order to identify their specific needs and to define priority measures to address them.

62. A number of respondents also identified key factors and constraints that have influenced the implementation and effectiveness of the Action Plan. These include the following:

(a) *Insufficient funding for biosafety:* Most countries reported that a lack of adequate financial resources is the biggest constraint to the effective implementation of the Action Plan. Some mentioned that biosafety activities are given limited or no allocations in the national budgets and others stated that they lack financial assistance to implement their draft national biosafety frameworks. A few countries (3 responses or 11%) said they had difficulties in accessing available funding and 2 countries said funding assistance was unavailable;

(b) *Lack of adequate human-resource capacity:* Some countries indicated that the main limitation to effective implementation of the Action Plan is the lack of adequately trained and experienced staff in biosafety issues and the difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified experts. The evaluation of GEF's support for the Protocol noted that officials who participate in the biosafety training workshops, courses, or exchange programmes sometimes leave their organizations or home country to pursue other professional opportunities;

(c) *Low priority given to biosafety:* A few countries mentioned that the effective implementation of the Action Plan is limited by a lack of political will by some of the donors to provide adequate financial assistance for biosafety. On the other hand, it was also noted that many developing countries and countries with economies in transition have given a low priority to biosafety issues in their national development plans and country strategy papers, which are used as the basis by most donors in determining their assistance to specific countries. For example one donor stated that: "... *one of the apparent difficulties for the EC as potential donor of capacity-building activities is that biosafety concerns are, in general, not prioritized in country strategy papers of potential recipient countries*";

(d) *Lack of information:* Some respondents noted that effective implementation of the Action Plan is also constrained by the low levels and quality of information in the Biosafety Clearing-House on the capacity-building needs of countries and the ongoing projects and activities. A few specifically observed that some of the information in capacity-building databases is incomplete and/or out of date;

(e) *Limited coordination and collaboration between biosafety initiatives:* A few respondents observed that the effectiveness of the implementation of the Action Plan is limited in part by the low level of coordination and collaboration between existing biosafety capacity-building initiatives, especially at the country level. The evaluation of GEF's support for the Protocol, for example, noted in some countries there was limited interaction between the GEF-funded biosafety projects and other bilateral or multilateral projects with similar objectives, funded through different government agencies. The evaluation also concluded that consultation and coordination by the GEF Secretariat at the global level were weak, and

that there had been little consideration as to whether biosafety could have been better linked to other related aspects of the GEF biodiversity portfolio. The limited coordination as in some cases led to duplication of effort, inconsistent approaches and missed opportunities for complementarity and greater impact.

63. A list of possible measures for addressing the above-mentioned the constraints encountered in the implementation of the Action Plan proposed respondents to the Action Plan review questionnaire are described in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/Add.1 (section III). The document also contains views and comments of participants that attended the second Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-Building Activities, which met in Tromsø, Norway from 18 to 20 January 2006 regarding possible measures for addressing the limiting factors to the implementation and effectiveness of the Action Plan. The report of that coordination meeting is available as information document: UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/INF/5.

V. REVIEW OF THE COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

64. In its decision BS-II/3, paragraph 28, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol requested the Executive Secretary to include in the questionnaire for the Action Plan review questions to assess the constraints encountered with the implementation of the Coordination Mechanism.

65. In response to the questionnaire, a few countries and organizations indicated that they had participated in the different elements of the Coordination Mechanism, either by contributing information or by using information provided through those elements. For example, 13 respondents (28) had participated in, or used information from, the Liaison Group meeting; 18 respondents (39%) had contributed information to, or used information from the capacity-building databases and the Biosafety Information Resource Centre; and 16 respondents (35%) had participated in, or used information from, the coordination meetings. Many respondents said they found the different elements of the Coordination Mechanism in which they participated useful.

66. A number of respondents (11 responses or 24%) reported that they had encountered some constraints and limitations in participating in the Coordination Mechanism and 18 respondents (39%) said they had not encountered any constraints. The rest did not answer the question or indicated it was not applicable to them. Some of the constraints and limitations mentioned include: a lack of the necessary national infrastructure to access and use the information generated by the coordination meetings and/or contained in the Biosafety Clearing-House databases; limited amount and quality of information available in capacity-building databases; difficulties in searching the Biosafety Clearing-House databases, a lack of financial resources to participate in the coordination meetings and the limited number of personnel available to participate in the different Coordination Mechanism elements.

67. A few suggestions were made for improving the implementation and effectiveness of the Coordination Mechanism. Some respondents suggested that efforts should be made to enhance the level and quality of information on capacity-building available in Biosafety Clearing-House and to update information in the databases regularly. One respondent observed that some of the information resources are out of date, incomplete and/or appear to be minimally used. Furthermore, two respondents observed that it is important to organize coordination meetings for both donor organizations and receiving countries to facilitate a good dialogue. It was also suggested that the possibility for regional coordination meetings and south-to-south dialogue should be explored.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

68. It is clear from the foregoing review that there have varying degrees of success in the implementation of the different components of the Action Plan. In part, this has been due to the fact that previous and existing capacity-building initiatives have given more attention to some issues than others. In particular, progress has been made with regard the development of national biosafety frameworks, the establishment of institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Protocol and in the promotion of awareness of the Protocol. To some extent, progress has also been made in promoting the exchange of information, including through the Biosafety Clearing-House and national biosafety websites and databases, in promoting technical and institutional collaboration and, in the development of human resources and training in various biosafety areas. However, there has been limited progress with regard to building capacities for addressing socio-economic considerations, identification of living modified organisms, technology transfer, risk assessment and risk management.

69. The Action Plan has also been fairly effective in providing a strategic framework for building capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Biosafety Protocol at the national, sub regional, regional and global levels. For example, it has facilitated the planning of capacity-building activities in some countries and enabled donor countries and organizations to plan their biosafety assistance programmes. A number of biosafety capacity-building projects have drawn directly on the elements and processes of the Action Plan and some of them have produced a range of concrete capacity-building results.

70. Nevertheless, the needs and priorities of some countries still remain unmet due to a number of limiting factors and operational deficiencies that have constrained the implementation and effectiveness of the Action Plan, including: a lack of adequate funding and other resources, limited sharing of information, poor coordination among the different initiatives and a lack of political will. A concerted effort is needed to address those constraints and to improve the delivery and coordination of capacity-building activities. It is also important for countries to cooperate and pool resources, including through international and regional organizations.

71. In general, the Action Plan as it currently stands is still relevant and comprehensive enough to guide the capacity-building efforts for the effective implementation of the Protocol. The main problem has to do with is the slow progress in its implementation due to the various constraints outlined above, rather than the scope and design of the Action Plan *per se*. Therefore, as proposed in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/Add.1, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol may wish to simply update the current Action Plan to incorporate key experiences and lessons learned during its initial implementation and adopt measures to improve its implementation and effectiveness at different levels.

VII. ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT DECISION

72. 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 to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

Action Plan

1. *Adopts* an updated version of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/4/Add.1), superseding the one adopted in decision BS-I/5, annex I;

/...

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to implement, as appropriate, the updated Action Plan referred to above;

3. *Invites* the Global Environmental Facility, developed country Parties and Governments, as well as relevant organizations to take into account the updated Action Plan referred to above and increase their financial and technical support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for its implementation;

4. *Urges* Parties and other Governments to integrate biosafety in their broader sustainable development strategies and approaches such as those related to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

5. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Governments to include biosafety issues in their development aid policies and strategies, and in their corresponding sectoral and bilateral programmes.

6. *Encourages* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to adopt a long-term perspective in the design and implementation biosafety capacity-building initiatives;

7. *Invites* developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition as well as other Governments to adopt, as appropriate, the following measures with a view to addressing some of the key factors limiting the implementation and effectiveness of the Action Plan at all levels:

(a) Improve coordination of donor assistance for biosafety initiatives at the country level;

(b) Mobilize funding from a wide range of sources, including the private sector;

(c) Provide adequate allocations for biosafety capacity-building activities in the national budgets;

(d) Coordinate and harmonize biosafety regulatory procedures and mechanisms at the regional and subregional levels;

8. *Invites* Parties and other Governments, in collaboration with relevant organizations, to adopt, as appropriate, the following measures in order to strengthen human resources for the effective implementation of the Protocol:

(a) Encourage the development of training of trainers' programmes in technical aspects of biosafety in collaboration with relevant partners, including regional centres of excellence and national training institutions;

(b) Develop core local expertise in biosafety through long-term formal training and/or attachment of personnel to specialized institutions or centres of excellence, located in the country or abroad;

(c) Utilize opportunities offered by capacity-building activities for biotechnology to the extent that they are relevant for biosafety;

(d) Promote and facilitate direct bilateral exchanges of technical experts between countries in order to build capacities in biosafety and encourage bilateral or regional cooperation;

9. *Urges* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to include in the design of their biosafety capacity-building initiatives a requirement to provide to the Biosafety Clearing-House information regarding the activities, outcomes, best practices and lessons learned from those initiatives in order to facilitate the broader sharing of such information;

10. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to provide to the Executive Secretary, at least three months prior to every other regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol, reports on the progress in, and effectiveness of, their efforts in implementing the Action Plan;

11. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare, on the basis of the submissions referred to above, a synthesis report for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocol;

Coordination Mechanism

12. *Reiterates* its call made in decision BS-I/5, paragraph 23, to all Parties and other Governments to establish national coordination mechanisms for biosafety capacity building;

13. *Invites* developed country Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to provide additional financial and other resources to enable developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to participate in the global Coordination Mechanism;

14. *Invites also* developed country Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to build their capacity to establish and implement biosafety coordination mechanisms at the national and regional levels;

15. *Urges* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to regularly update, as appropriate, information on their capacity-building submitted to the Biosafety Clearing-House and to improve the level of details and quality of the information;

16. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to document and publicize, including through the Biosafety Clearing-House, experiences, best practices and lessons learned in coordination and collaboration;

17. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and regional bodies, including the regional economic commissions of the United Nations, to organize, as appropriate, regional and subregional coordination meetings on capacity-building for biosafety;

18. *Encourages* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations offering to host coordination meetings to invite participants from both recipient countries and donor Governments and organizations in order facilitate effective dialogue on the capacity-building efforts.
