



**Convention on
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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

Fifth meeting

Nagoya, Japan, 11-15 October 2010

**CAPACITY-BUILDING: REPORT OF THE COORDINATION MEETINGS FOR
GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING OR FUNDING
BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES**

1. The Executive Secretary is pleased to circulate herewith, for the information of participants attending the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, reports of the fifth and sixth Coordination Meetings for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-Building Activities which were held from 9 to 11 March 2009 in San José, Costa Rica and from 1 to 3 February 2010 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, respectively.

2. The two reports were previously issued by the Secretariat as documents UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/4 and UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/6/2, respectively.

REPORT OF THE FIFTH COORDINATION MEETING FOR GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING OR FUNDING BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES ¹

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

3. The fifth Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-Building Activities was held from 9 to 11 March 2009 in San José, Costa Rica. It was hosted by the Government of Costa Rica, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, with support from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). It was held at the IICA headquarters. The Government of Norway and the Government of Germany through the GTZ/African Union Commission biosafety project provided financial support for participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to attend the meeting.

4. The meeting was attended by 47 participants from 22 Governments and 15 organizations. The countries were: Belize, Cambodia, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, European Community, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa and United States of America. The organizations were: African Union Commission, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, Desarrollo Medio Ambiental Sustentable, ECOROPA, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad en Costa Rica (INBio), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), RAEIN-Africa, United Nations Environment Programme-Global Environment Facility (UNEP/GEF), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and University of Vechta. The full list of participants is contained in annex II to this report.

5. The objectives of the meeting were to:

(a) To share information and experiences from different biosafety capacity-building initiatives;

(b) To identify emerging biosafety capacity-building issues, needs and gaps and ways to address them;

(c) To discuss possible measures to facilitate the strengthening of national capacities in:
(i) environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of living modified organisms (LMOs); and
(ii) integration of biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes.

II. MEETING PROCEEDINGS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

6. The meeting was opened by Hon. Carlos Villalobos, Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica. In his remarks, Hon. Villalobos welcomed the participants to Costa Rica, noting that it

¹ This report has also been published as document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/4.

was an honour for Costa Rica to host the meeting. He thanked IICA for providing the conference facilities and for its support in co-organizing the meeting. Hon. Villalobos noted that the meeting would be discussing issues that were critical to ensuring the safe use of modern biotechnology. In particular, he highlighted the need to integrate biosafety into national development plans and programmes. He noted that, if used in a safe manner, biotechnology had a great potential to contribute to improving human well-being and promoting sustainable development. He noted that Costa Rica being a very biodiverse country with high agricultural potential, the Government was very committed to ensuring adequate protection for its biological diversity and human health from potential adverse effects of modern biotechnology. Hon. Villalobos wished participants fruitful deliberations, which he hoped would result in concrete actions for advancing capacity-building in the field of biosafety.

7. Opening remarks were also made by Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, Executive Director of IICA and Mr. Charles Gbedemah on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

8. In his opening remarks, Dr. Brathwaite welcomed all the participants to the IICA headquarters and wished them successful deliberations. He noted that global agriculture would have to feed an increasing population, which was expected to reach 8 billion people by 2020 with approximately 6 billion in developing countries. Under those conditions, traditional agriculture might not guarantee the needed food supply without expanding the production frontier or degrading the natural resources. He observed that biotechnology offers a powerful tool that could help to alleviate poverty and ensure food security. Nevertheless, this new technology has generated concerns over its possible adverse environmental and health effects. Those concerns had inspired most countries to develop regulatory mechanisms for environmental risk assessment and food safety. Dr. Brathwaite reported that IICA, aware of the importance of the subject, has been developing activities in biotechnology and biosafety since 2005 in order to build capacities for the safe use of biotechnology and promotion of sustainable agriculture in the Latin America and Caribbean region. In the same vein, IICA endorsed the creation of platforms to exchange information and experiences within the framework of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Dr. Brathwaite noted that it was fundamental that countries in the region, as producers and net food exporters, organized themselves as to face the difficulties and technical challenges, including through development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks. He therefore noted that IICA was pleased to host the coordination meeting and encouraged regional and global activities that would strengthen capacities to face those challenges.

9. In his statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Gbedemah thanked the Government of Costa Rica for hosting the meeting and IICA for providing excellent meeting facilities and for providing organizational support for the meeting. He also thanked the Government of Norway and the Government of Germany through the GTZ/African Union Commission biosafety project for providing financial support, which had enabled the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Mr. Gbedemah underscored the important role played to date by the coordination meetings in facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experiences among stakeholders involved in capacity-building for biosafety and in the development of innovative ideas and guidance for enhancing capacity-building efforts on specific issues, such as documentation and identification (Article 18) and regional cooperation. He noted that the present meeting would focus on capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs and on the issue of the integration of biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes. In conclusion, he recognized the contributions made by Ms. Leda Avila of IICA; Ms Gabriela Zúñiga, Mr. Alex May and Mr. Alejandro Hernández Soto of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; and Erie Tamale of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in organizing the meeting. He also thanked members of the Steering Committee for their guidance and support throughout the preparations of the meeting.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

10. After the opening session, the participants elected Mr. Hartmut Meyer (Germany) to serve as Chairperson of the meeting and Ms. Francisca Acevedo Gasman (Mexico) to serve as Rapporteur.

11. The meeting then adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/1), which was developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Steering Committee:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1. Election of officers;
 - 2.2. Adoption of the agenda;
 - 2.3. Organization of work.
3. Standing agenda items:
 - 3.1 Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meetings and relevant decisions of the Parties to the Protocol;
 - 3.2 Update on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building projects/initiatives: latest developments and emerging opportunities for collaboration;
 - 3.3 Consideration of the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries.
4. Issues for in-depth consideration:
 - 4.1. Capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of living modified organisms: current status, priority needs and strategic measures to improve national capacities;
 - 4.2. Capacity-building for and experiences gained in integrating biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and national programmes for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
5. Operational modalities and programme of work of future coordination meetings.
6. Other matters.
7. Conclusions and recommendations.
8. Closure of the meeting.

12. It also adopted its organization of work for the meeting, as contained in annex I to this report. Participants agreed to start the substantive discussions with agenda item 3.2 (Update on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building projects/initiatives) and then take up agenda item 3.1 (Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meetings and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol). Subsequently, it was also agreed to consider agenda 3.3 (Consideration of the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries) while discussing the programme of work of future coordination meetings, under agenda item 5.

ITEM 3. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

3.1. *Report on implementation of the recommendations of the previous coordination meetings and the COP-MOP decisions*

13. Under this agenda item, the Chair of the meeting, Hartmut Meyer, gave an overview of how recommendations of the previous coordination meetings were taken up in the decisions of the Parties to the Protocol. He reported that Parties to the Protocol had adopted most of the previous recommendations. These included those on the capacity-building Action Plan, the roster of biosafety experts, identification and documentation of LMOs (Article 18 of the Protocol) and general measures to advance capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Protocol.

14. Mr. Meyer noted that in its decision BS-IV/16, paragraph 3, the Parties to the Protocol in particular took note of the recommendations of the fourth coordination meeting concerning capacity-building in socio-economic considerations and gave the next coordination meeting a mandate to further consider possibilities for cooperation in identifying needs for capacity-building among Parties for research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of LMOs and to submit its recommendations for consideration by the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

15. Following the Chair's introduction, the following two issues were discussed in detail:

(a) Implementation of the mandate given to the coordination meeting by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in paragraph 3 of decision BS-IV/16, regarding socio-economic considerations; and

(b) Options for further developing and promoting the utilization of the two draft guidelines that were developed at the second and third coordination meetings, i.e. "Interim Guiding Framework for Promoting Synergies and Complementarities Between Biosafety Capacity-Building Initiatives at the Country Level" and the "Draft Guidance on Promoting Regional and Subregional Initiatives and Approaches to Capacity-Building in Biosafety".

(a) *Capacity-building in addressing socio-economic considerations*

16. With regard to the issue of socio-economic considerations, participants noted that the mandate given to the coordination meeting by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol is limited to considering possibilities for cooperation in identifying needs for capacity-building among Parties in: (i) research on socio-economic impacts of LMOs and; (ii) information exchange on socio-economic impacts. However, it was observed that many countries still lack a clear understanding of what socio-economic considerations are and as such they are not able to identify their specific capacity-building needs with regard to how to assess and take them into account in decision-making regarding LMOs. It was reported that a number of countries mention socio-economic considerations broadly in their national biosafety frameworks but only a few of specify what they are.

17. A few initiatives have been taken by different Governments and organizations to address this issue. For example, it was reported that the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit, with financial support from the Department for International Development (DfID) of the United Kingdom and in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, initiated a study in 2007 to examine national experiences with the integration of socio-economic considerations in biosafety decision-making processes. Under this initiative, an annotated bibliography of peer-reviewed and "grey" literature related to socio-economic considerations in biosafety has been assembled and will be made available through the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH). A draft questionnaire has also been developed by a panel of experts to

document national-level experiences, needs and examples. The results of the questionnaire will be used to develop a toolkit module on socio-economic considerations in the context of Article 26 of the Protocol. Other initiatives include: a research study which was carried out by the World Resources Institute,² ongoing studies by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and studies by ASARECA's Eastern and Central Africa Programme for Agricultural Policy Analysis (ECAPAPA) and the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS).

18. The participants agreed that this issue would be one of the substantive agenda items for the next coordination meeting. The meeting will, *inter alia*, identify mechanisms through which Parties could cooperate in identifying their capacity-building needs with regard to conducting research and exchanging information on socio-economic impacts of LMOs, in accordance with the mandate given by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. Participants mentioned the following as some of the possible mechanisms that could be considered: regional and subregional level brainstorming/consultative workshops, use of existing regional and subregional networks and initiatives, regional surveys for example using questionnaires, and others. The next meeting will also review the experiences from different countries and identify specific examples of socio-economic issues that have been considered by countries, and how they have been assessed and taken into account in decision-making on LMOs.

19. In the preparation for the next coordination meeting, it was suggested that the results from the UNEP-SCBD survey should be taken into account, including the bibliographic review and the questionnaire. In this regard, the Secretariat was requested to work with the UNEP-GEF Biosafety team to send out the questionnaire and compile the results for consideration at the next coordination meeting. The Secretariat was also requested to compile information on capacity-building needs and priorities with respect to socio-economic considerations, submitted by Parties and other Government through the BCH and other processes such as the UNDP/GEF-supported National Capacity Self-Assessments.

(b) Options for dealing with outputs of previous coordination meetings

20. Under this agenda item, the participants also discussed options for further developing and utilising the "Interim Guiding Framework for Promoting Synergies and Complementarities Between Biosafety Capacity-Building Initiatives at the Country Level", which was developed at the second coordination meeting, and the "Draft Guidance on Promoting Regional and Subregional Initiatives and Approaches to Capacity-Building in Biosafety", which was developed at the third coordination meeting.

21. It was agreed that the draft guidance documents needed revision and streamlining before they could either be submitted to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol for formal adoption or published and disseminated publications of the Secretariat. In this regard, a small taskforce was established to review the draft guidelines and propose revised versions for consideration by the meeting. The taskforce consisted of: Michael DeShield of Belize, Desmond Mahon of Canada, Lucy Naydenova and Jeroen Rijniers of the Netherlands, Chris Viljoen of South Africa and Christine von Weizsäcker of ECOROPA.

22. The meeting discussed and approved the revised versions of the two guidelines, as contained in annexes II and III to this report. The Secretariat was requested to finalize them for adoption at the sixth coordination meeting after which they would be forwarded for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

² Fransen, L., La Viña, A., Dayrit, F., Gatlabayan, L., Santosa, D.A., & Adiwibowo, S. (2005). Integrating socio-economic considerations into biosafety decisions: The role of public participation. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute: http://pdf.wri.org/fransen_lavina_biosafetywhitepaper.pdf

3.2. Update on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building activities

23. Under this agenda item, 37 participants made short presentations on their ongoing capacity-building initiatives, focusing on the latest developments since the previous coordination meeting. Participants who were unable to make their presentations were invited to submit written briefs thereafter to the Secretariat. The Secretariat reported that all the submissions would be compiled into an information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/INF/1) which will be posted on web page for the fifth coordination meeting (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=BSCMCB-05>).

ITEM 4. ISSUES FOR IN-DEPTH CONSIDERATION

4.1. Capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of living modified organisms

24. Under this agenda item, participants reviewed the report of the online conference on “capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs” which was held from 3 to 28 November 2008 (which was made available as document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/2). They also reviewed the conclusions and recommendations from the regional workshops on capacity-building and exchange of experiences on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs which were organized by the Secretariat in 2007 and 2008 (which were compiled and circulated as information document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/INF/2).

25. It was observed that the report of the online conference and also the reports of the regional workshops contained useful information which could provide valuable input into other processes. For example, the information is relevant for the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management, which was established by the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, the meeting of academic institutions and organizations involved in biosafety education and training, the process for the development of the strategic plan of the Protocol.

26. The participants highlighted the problem of “brain drain” and a high turnover of the few available experts in the national regulatory institutions. In this regard, they emphasized the need to engage and collaborate with relevant academic institutions in order to develop a critical mass of expertise in risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs. It was also noted that building national capacities in risk assessment requires training of persons with different specialised disciplines, such as ecology, entomology, microbiology and others.

27. After the initial round of discussions, the meeting agreed to identify a set of action points that could be undertaken, in the short-term and long-term and at different levels (national, regional, subregional and global levels), in order to assist countries to build and strengthen their capacities in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs. Subsequently, two working groups were established, which discussed and developed matrices on:

- (a) Capacity-building for environmental risk assessment;
- (b) Capacity-building for post-release monitoring of LMOs.

28. The two matrices from the working groups which were then adopted at the plenary session are contained in annex III to the present report. The Secretariat was requested to finalize the matrices and make them available at the next coordination meeting.

29. The participants also noted the linkage between the work of the coordination meetings on risk assessment and that of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment. It was agreed

that when the AHTEG has finished its work, the capacity-building action points in the matrices may need to be further revised by the coordination meeting.

4.2. Capacity-building for and experiences gained in integrating biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes

30. Under this item, participants were invited to review the report of the online conference on capacity-building for integration of biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes which was held from 19 January to 13 February 2009 and made available to the meeting as document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/3. Before the discussions, the meeting heard four short case-study presentations by Mr. Carlos Woolford of Guatemala, Ms. Marnie Portillo of Honduras, Ms. Helle Biseth of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and Ms. Alexandra Mueller of the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

31. Mr. Woolford described the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) process in Guatemala and the effort made to integrate environmental issues. It was reported that one of the thirteen objectives of Guatemala's current Poverty Reduction Strategy, is creating and strengthening sustainable environmental policies to rescue, protect, conserve, develop and exploit natural resources in a controlled manner. The strategy emphasizes the need for balanced and sustainable management of environmental resources, in particular water and forests, and prevention of natural disasters. However biosafety is not specifically mentioned in the strategy.

32. Ms. Portillo described the situation in Honduras with regards to the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the consideration of environmental issues in the national development process. It was noted that Honduras's PRSP highlights the need to reduce the ecological risks and environmental vulnerability of the country through improved processes of environmental and risk management and the development of economic and financial tools that foster sustainable natural-resource management and environmental protection. However, environment, and biodiversity and biosafety for that matter, currently receives a relatively small portion of the support provided for the implementation of the PRSP.

33. Ms. Biseth gave an overview of the Norwegian development cooperation policy, strategies and approaches and the efforts being made to integrate environmental considerations. She reported that Norway, like other donors, provides development assistance to partner countries in different forms including: (i) sector-wide support or "basket funding" where donors pool and channel their funds into a given sector as a group; (ii) sub-sector support where it earmarks its assistance to a specific part of the sector (e.g. within the environment sector, support for protected area management); (iii) project support; and (iv) funding of specific individual activities, such as conferences or workshops. She noted that in recent years, donors have made effort to coordinate their assistance to different sectors or to national budgets and many have embraced what is known as the "budget support" approach where they act as a group to support the national budget of a recipient. Under this arrangement, the recipient countries have to develop national strategic plans, such as PRSPs, based on their own priorities, which form the basis for the national budget and donor support. In this regard, Ms. Biseth emphasized the need for the line ministries or departments responsible for biosafety to make sure that biosafety considerations are integrated into such high-level strategy documents if it is to be adequately considered among the national priorities to receive budgetary allocations and donor funding support in the medium or long term. She also highlighted the need to integrate biosafety into relevant sectoral policies and plans including agriculture, science and technology and environment.

34. In her presentation, Ms. Muller reported that Germany had bilateral agreements with different partner countries for support to sector-wide programmes and projects which are developed with the country and other donor organizations. The issues and activities to be implemented were identified

through bilateral negotiations and had to be based on national development strategies and plans. Therefore, it was necessary to integrate environment as a whole, and biosafety specifically, into these strategies because they formed the basis of the bilateral negotiations. Donors also needed to mainstream the question of biosafety and biodiversity conservation in their development cooperation policies and strategies. Ms. Muller observed that in general integration of environment in PRSPs had been very difficult, partly due to poor communication and marketing. For example, she noted that biodiversity was often presented simply as protection of species and not effectively in terms of the ecosystem goods and services that underpinned people's livelihoods and contributed to poverty reduction. Sometimes biosafety and biodiversity issues and initiatives under the Convention on Biological Diversity were divorced from each other. She recommended that biosafety issues should be effectively integrated in the national biodiversity strategies and action plans and in the communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities under the Convention.

35. After the short presentations, participants discussed the challenges to, and possible strategies for promoting, the integration of biosafety into national development plans and development cooperation policies and strategies. It was clarified that the focus of the discussions was not on integration of biosafety into PRSPs *per se* but also other high-level development plans, policies and processes, including National Development Plans, National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs). It was pointed out, for example, that some countries, such as Malaysia, Thailand, Mexico and others did not need to prepare PRSPs but had other types of development plans or policies into which biosafety needed to be integrated.

36. One of the main limiting factors identified is a lack of clear understanding of the concept of biosafety by policy makers, officials responsible for national development planning and the public lack of appreciation of its importance as a key strategy for sustainable development. It was agreed that there is a need to raise awareness of biosafety at the highest level in order to generate broad support for its mainstreaming into the development process. For example, it is important to sensitize policymakers and the public about the potential threat to the environment, the economy and people's livelihoods if biosafety issues are not effectively addressed. This would also require effective communication of the science and the economics of biosafety, backed with concrete data, so that policymakers, planners and other key stakeholders can be convinced about the need to integrate it into the national development agenda.

37. Participants also emphasized the need to integrate biosafety issues into sectors and economic activities that were linked to the transfer, handling and use of LMOs, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, health, food safety, food aid, science and technology and others. It is also important to articulate the linkages between biosafety and other issues such as food security, climate change and energy (e.g., biofuels) and others linked to the use of LMOs, which are currently considered high priorities in many national development planning processes.

38. The participants noted the urgent need to build the capacity of officials responsible for biosafety at the national and sectoral levels to be able to integrate biosafety into national development plans and programmes. They identified the following as some of the measures that could contribute to building or strengthening national capacities:

- (a) Seminars to sensitize policymakers, planners and other relevant officials by providing relevant information on the issue of biosafety and its relevance to sustainable development;
- (b) Training workshops to develop the skills of relevant officials in mainstreaming biosafety considerations into development plans and processes;
- (c) Development of guidance on how to integrate biosafety considerations into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, programmes and projects.

39. Furthermore, the participants identified different strategic opportunities/entry points that could be used to integrate biosafety into national development processes. These include stakeholders meetings for the preparation of national development plans, national budget consultations, reviews of country assistance strategies and sectoral policy frameworks, sector-wide technical consultations, strategic environmental assessments and project-level environmental impact assessments. They also noted that National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) developed in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity are crucial instruments to facilitating the mainstreaming of biosafety.

ITEM 5. OPERATIONAL MODALITIES AND PROGRAMME OF WORK OF FUTURE COORDINATION MEETINGS

A. Review of the operational procedures and guidelines for the coordination meetings and election of a new Steering Committee

40. Under this agenda item, the participants reviewed and amended the operational procedures and guidelines for the coordination meetings which were adopted at the first coordination meeting. It was agreed to delete “Consideration of the priority needs of countries and specific requests for capacity-building support” as one of the standing items on the agenda of all the coordination meetings. Paragraph 10 of the guidelines was also amended to specify that the following categories of stakeholders would be members of the Steering Committee: United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations and donors.

41. The following were elected to serve on the next steering committee:

1. Dr. Hartmut Meyer (Germany) – Western Europe and others group
2. Prof. Chris Viljoen (South Africa) – African region – for one more year
3. Dr. Pisey Oum (Cambodia) – Asia Pacific region
4. Dr. Francisca Acevedo Gasman (Mexico) – Latin America and the Caribbean region
5. Dr. Aleksej Tarasjev (Serbia) – Central and Eastern Europe region;
6. TBA – Donors
7. Dr. Fee-Chon Low (UNEP/GEF) – UN agencies
8. Mr. Decio Ripandelli (ICGEB) – Intergovernmental organizations.

42. The following persons were elected to serve as alternate members for the respective regions in the event that the substantive members is not be able to attend the steering committee meetings due to various reasons:

1. Mr. Kangayatkarasu Nagulendran (Malaysia) – Asia Pacific region
2. Mr. Alejandro Hernandez (Costa Rica) – Latin America and the Caribbean region
3. Mrs. Milena Roudná (Czech Republic) – Central and Eastern Europe region;
4. Mr. Bather Kone (African Union) – Intergovernmental organizations.

B. Programme of work for future coordination meetings

43. Under this agenda sub-item, participants exchanged views on priority issues requiring urgent capacity-building support and guidance, which would be discussed by the upcoming coordination meetings in the medium term. In this regard, the following priority issues were identified:

- (a) Public awareness and participation in decision-making;
- (b) Enforcement of regulatory frameworks;
- (c) Capacity-building in the use of the Biosafety Clearing-House;
- (d) Handling of liability and redress issues at the national level;
- (e) Risk assessment of genetically modified animals.

44. It was agreed that the upcoming coordination meetings would take up the issues in the above order of priority. The Steering Committee was mandated to decide when the different issues would be scheduled for consideration.

C. Date and venue of the next coordination meeting

45. The participant from Cambodia expressed his country's interest in hosting the next coordination meeting. He will make further consultations with the relevant national authorities and inform the Secretariat in due course of the final decision. The participants welcomed the expression of interest and tentatively agreed to host the meeting in the first quarter of 2010. The representative of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity offered to explore possibility of supporting some participants from the Asian region to attend the meeting. The participant from the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission also expressed her organization's interest to host the next meeting in the event that Cambodia is unable to do so or the seventh coordination meeting.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

46. Under agenda item 6 (Other matters), one participant proposed that future meetings should again provide opportunities for in-depth case-studies. Another participant suggested that during the next meeting, invited participants should be requested to prepare a short presentation on how they are integrating biosafety in their development plans and programme. Furthermore, one participant proposed that when addressing the issue of public awareness and participation, a representative of the Aarhus Convention should be invited to share the experiences under that Convention.

ITEM 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

47. The meeting discussed a number of issues and possible measures that could be taken to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to develop and strengthen their capacities in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs and in integration of biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes. It also discussed the way forward in developing possible options for cooperation in identifying the capacity-building needs of Parties for research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of LMOs.

48. With regard to capacity-building in handling socio-economic considerations, it was agreed that:

- (a) The next coordination meeting should, among other things, identify mechanisms through which Parties could cooperate in identifying their capacity-building needs for research and exchange of information on socio-economic impacts of LMOs, in accordance with the mandate given by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Parties to the Protocol, in paragraph 3 of decision BS-IV/16;

(b) The next coordination meeting should also review the experiences from different countries and identify specific examples of socio-economic issues that have been considered, and how they have been assessed and taken into account in decision-making concerning LMOs;

(c) The work of the coordination meeting on this issue should build upon, and avoid duplication of, the work under the UNEP-GEF initiative. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity should collaborate with the UNEP-GEF Biosafety team to send out the questionnaire and compile the results for consideration at the next coordination meeting;

(d) The Secretariat should compile information on capacity-building needs and priorities with respect to socio-economic considerations, submitted by Governments through the BCH and other processes such as the UNDP/GEF-supported National Capacity Self-Assessments.

49. With regard to capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs, it was agreed that:

(a) The Secretariat should further develop the matrices of action points for advancing capacity-building in risk assessment and post-release monitoring of LMOs, contained in annex IV, and submit them for further consideration at the next coordination meeting. The meeting will consider the possibility of submitting the finalized matrices to the fifth meeting of the Parties for adoption;

(b) The work of the coordination meeting on this issue should take into account, and complement, the work of the AHTEG on risk assessment and risk management. When the AHTEG has finished its work, the capacity-building action points in the matrices should be reviewed and further developed, if necessary.

50. Concerning the issue of capacity-building for integrating biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes, the meeting agreed that:

(a) Further work needs to be done to develop concrete measures to assist Parties to integrate biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes. In the meantime, countries should identify and share experiences and case-studies of how biosafety and/or other environmental considerations have been integrated into national development plans and programmes;

(b) The ministries and departments responsible for biosafety, in particular the National Focal Points for the Protocol, should champion efforts to integrate biosafety into relevant sectors and national development plans. In order to achieve that, they should be conversant with the national processes and procedures leading to the development and/or revision of national development plans, including PRSPs;

(c) Training activities should be organized for national biosafety focal points and other officials dealing with biosafety to acquire skills and know-how in mainstreaming strategies, tools and methodologies. The training activities could include regional workshops and guidance materials or toolkits;

(d) Seminars should be organized to promote awareness among high-level policymakers, planners, donors and other relevant stakeholders of biosafety and its importance to sustainable development in order for them to appreciate the need to integrate it into national development plans and development assistance programmes;

(e) Relevant national authorities should ensure that efforts to integrate biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes should be closely linked and aligned with other environmental mainstreaming efforts, in particular the integration of biodiversity into development

plans and processes. In this regard, it is important to ensure that biosafety issues are adequately addressed in national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(f) In order to facilitate the integration of the biosafety into national development processes, effort should be made to show the linkages between biosafety and other key topical issues such as food security, climate change, biofuels and others that are associated with the use of LMOs.

ITEM 8. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

51. On the last day, participants reviewed and adopted the draft report of the meeting covering the proceedings of the previous two days. The Secretariat was requested to incorporate proceedings of the last day and send the final draft to all participants for comments. The present report has been finalized on that basis.

52. The meeting was closed on Wednesday, 11 March 2009 at 6.10 p.m.

Annex I

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

9 March 2009 9 a.m. – 9.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda item:</i> 1. Opening of the meeting.
9.30 a.m. – 10 a.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 2. Organizational matters: 2.1. Election of officers; 2.2. Adoption of the agenda; 2.3. Organization of work.
10 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
10.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 3. Standing agenda items: 3.1. Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meetings and relevant decisions of the Parties to the Protocol; 3.2. Update on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building projects/initiatives: latest developments and emerging opportunities for collaboration; 3.3. Consideration of the capacity-building needs and priorities of countries.
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break
2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	Agenda item 3 (<i>continued</i>)
3.30 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
4 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 4. Issues for in-depth consideration: 4.1. Capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of living modified organisms: current status, priority needs and strategic measures to improve national capacities.
10 March 2009 9 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 4.2. Capacity-building for and experiences gained in integrating Biosafety into national development plans, strategies and programmes, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and national programmes for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> Group discussions on item 4.1
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break

2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	Agenda item 4 (<i>continued</i>) Group discussions on item 4.2.
3.30 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
4 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.	Agenda item 4 (<i>continued</i>) Group presentations.
11 March 2009 9 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> Group discussions.
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> Consideration of group discussion reports.
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break
2 p.m. – 5 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 5. Operational modalities and programme of work of future coordination meetings. 6. Other matters. 7. Conclusions and recommendations. 8. Closure of the meeting.

Annex II

**DRAFT GUIDING FRAMEWORK FOR PROMOTING PRACTICAL SYNERGIES AND
COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING
INITIATIVES AT THE COUNTRY-LEVEL**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision BS-I/5 on capacity-building, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted a Coordination Mechanism to facilitate the exchange of information with a view to promoting partnerships and maximizing synergies and complementarities between biosafety capacity-building initiatives (i.e. projects, programmes and other activities).

2. Efforts are being made to promote coordination at the global level through the Coordination Mechanism, especially the capacity-building databases and the coordination meetings. There is also an urgent need to promote coordination and to realize concrete synergies and complementarity between biosafety capacity-building initiatives at the country-level. This guiding framework has been developed to facilitate this process.

II. OBJECTIVE

3. This framework is intended to provide guiding principles and a list of options of operational modalities that could be applied to enhance coordination and harmonization between different capacity-building initiatives for promoting the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety, with a view to achieving practical synergies and complementarity between them. The ultimate goal is to maximize the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of these initiatives.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition (hereafter referred to as “recipient countries”) as well as Governments and organizations providing capacity-building assistance for biosafety (hereafter referred to as “donors and organizations”) should consider taking into account the following operational principles to guide their efforts in promoting coordination and harmonization of biosafety capacity-building initiatives at the country-level:

- (a) Adopt a demand-driven approach;
- (b) Take into account the needs and circumstances of the country;
- (c) Have political endorsement;
- (d) Promote synergies between different capacity-building initiatives;
- (e) Identify or establish a national coordination mechanism for biosafety capacity development including, *inter alia*, the national focal point for the Cartagena Protocol and the competent national authority/authorities and, if appropriate, the national biosafety committee;
- (f) Donors and organizations should deliver their assistance in consultation with the national biosafety capacity development coordination mechanisms, where they have been established;

- (g) Donors and organizations should, to the extent possible, streamline their assistance procedures, including monitoring and reporting requirements, so that recipient countries with limited capacities do not have to deal with multiple requirements;
- (h) Encourage inclusive, transparent and participatory stakeholder involvement;
- (i) Institutional arrangements for coordination should be flexible in order to respond to local needs and changing circumstances and to accommodate the comparative advantages of different donors.

IV. ELEMENTS THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR PROMOTING PRACTICAL SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES AT THE COUNTRY-LEVEL

A. Procedures and approaches

5. The process of coordination and harmonization of biosafety capacity-building initiatives, particularly at the country-level, may involve the following basic steps, procedures and approaches:

- (a) Building the capacity of recipient countries in order to effectively manage the process;
- (b) *Situational analysis and needs assessment*: In order to achieve effective coordination and harmonization it may be necessary for recipient countries to review the status and effectiveness of their biosafety capacity-building efforts (including an overview of capacity building initiatives that have been or are being carried out, the level of implementation of the national biosafety frameworks and the lessons learned from thereof). It may also be necessary for recipient countries to assess their needs and priorities. That information could be made available through the Biosafety Clearing-House;
- (c) *Development of national biosafety capacity-building strategies and plans*: In accordance with paragraphs 19 and 20 of decision BS-II/3, recipient countries should consider developing, on the basis of the needs assessments, national biosafety capacity-building strategies and action plans defining their overall vision, priorities, objectives and targets. The strategy and action plan could also stipulate the roles of different players, the desired approaches and the areas of focus. Such plans could be used as the reference documents for those interested in providing capacity-building assistance and could form the basis for coordinating and synchronizing different capacity-building initiatives. The national biosafety capacity-building strategies and action plans should be made available through the Biosafety Clearing-House.

B. Specific coordination measures and actions

6. Specific measures and actions that could be undertaken to achieve practical synergies and complementarity between biosafety capacity-building initiatives could include, *inter alia*, the following:

- (a) *Formalized coordination activities and measures* could include the following: periodic meetings between recipient Governments and donors/organizations (including round tables or consultative groups), regular donor and organizations' coordination meetings held in recipient countries (including joint participation in their respective project steering committees), institutionalized exchange of information through websites or databases, joint reviews and assessments, implementation of joint action plans; joint projects or activities (e.g. seminars and workshops, training events or studies), preparation of joint country and sectoral strategy papers; or pooling of resources (e.g. through co-financing of specific activities or through trust fund arrangements);

(b) *Semi-formal coordination measures* could include: exchange of publications and training materials, exchange of work plans or schedules of events; cross-participation in each others' activities, including seminars and workshops; exchange of draft documents (including project appraisals, analyses, guidance materials, etc.) for review and comment; or participation in joint ad-hoc technical groups or task forces (e.g. to develop joint guidance, methodologies and other tools);

(c) *Informal or ad hoc coordination measures* could include: personal contacts and networking; exchange of opinions and insights; informal briefings; ad hoc consultations or participation in each other's planning and review meetings;

(d) *Ongoing country-level dialogue*: In the course of implementing the capacity-building programme, it may be useful to organize periodic forums at the country level in order to facilitate dialogue between recipient Governments and donors/organizations. This would serve to review progress with the coordination and harmonization efforts at both the strategic and operational levels, to share experiences and to discuss any new developments.

C. Institutional arrangements

7. The National Biosafety Committee, or an equivalent body, could be used to serve as the national steering group for the coordination and harmonization of biosafety capacity-building assistance. The activities that such a body could undertake would, *inter alia*, include the following:

- (a) Serve as the reference point regarding biosafety capacity-building assistance programmes;
- (b) Liaise and establish linkages with the overall national aid coordination mechanism, where it exists;
- (c) Liaise and establish linkages with other relevant capacity-building initiatives at the national level;
- (d) Ensure effective coordination among relevant Government agencies and other stakeholders;
- (e) Organize and manage biosafety capacity-building consultative meetings or round tables for donors and relevant stakeholders;
- (f) Coordinate the assessment of biosafety capacity-building needs and priorities and the periodic review of the assessments;
- (g) Coordinate the preparation of the biosafety capacity-building strategy and action plan;
- (h) Analyze and track external assistance commitments and disbursements by donors for the biosafety capacity-building action plan to ensure effective resource allocation;
- (i) Monitor and report on the execution of the donor-funded biosafety projects and programmes;
- (j) Monitor the overall progress of biosafety capacity-building efforts and propose ways and means for improvement.

8. To facilitate communication with stakeholders, the coordination mechanism may consider designating a contact point and make his/her contact details available through the Biosafety Clearing-House. The designated contact may also be given the responsibility of notifying the BCH about all the capacity-building initiatives undertaken in a given country.

9. In addition to the national coordination mechanisms described above, donors and organizations providing biosafety capacity-building assistance to the same countries may wish to consider establishing a consultative mechanism among themselves. This could include regular consultative meetings to, among other things: exchange information; harmonize their assistance policies and approaches where possible; synchronize their assistance initiatives and identify opportunities for joint activities; and agree on joint operational requirements and guidelines to be discussed with recipient Government.

10. Donors and organizations may also wish to designate, at their home offices, contact persons for biosafety capacity-building assistance activities and make this information available through the Biosafety Clearing-House. Such a person would serve as a contact point for all information regarding the biosafety assistance programmes of the donor in different countries.

Annex III

**DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR PROMOTING REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL INITIATIVES
AND APPROACHES TO CAPACITY-BUILDING IN BIOSAFETY**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Article 22 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety requires Parties to “cooperate in the development and/or strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities in biosafety (...) including through existing global, regional, subregional and national institutions and organizations and, as appropriate, through facilitating private sector involvement.” It states that such cooperation includes scientific and technical training in the proper and safe management of biotechnology and the use of risk assessment and risk management for biosafety, and in the enhancement of technological and institutional capacities in biosafety.

2. Many developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition require significant investments in human resources development, institutional building and technological capacities in the area of biosafety. Addressing those needs would require effective collaboration and coordination between Governments and other stakeholders, including both the private and public sectors, at different levels.

3. The purpose of this guidance is to assist Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to catalyze and/or strengthen regional and subregional approaches and initiatives for building capacities in biosafety, and biotechnology to the extent that it is required for biosafety, for the purpose of the effective implementation of the Protocol.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4. Regional and subregional approaches and initiatives to capacity-building in biosafety should be based on the following principles:

(a) Focus on issues or needs that can best be addressed through regional and subregional cooperation;

(b) Establish a process for identifying biosafety issues that could be addressed through regional and subregional cooperation;

(c) Identify institutional mechanisms for promoting regional and subregional cooperation on capacity building in biosafety;

(d) Establish operational strategies and measures for promoting regional and subregional cooperation on capacity building in biosafety on a case by case basis;

General relevant principles

(e) Adopt a demand-driven approach;

(f) Take into account the needs and circumstances of the different participating countries;

- (g) Encourage inclusive and transparent participatory stakeholder involvement;
- (h) Strengthen existing bodies and structures;
- (i) Promote synergies with relevant initiatives;
- (j) Have political endorsement in all participating countries; and
- (k) Involve the National Biosafety Focal Point and the National Competent Authority/ies.

III. ELEMENTS THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED, *INTER ALIA*, FOR AS GUIDANCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES FOR PROMOTING REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL COOPERATION ON CAPACITY-BUILDING IN BIOSAFETY

5. Focus on issues or needs that can best be addressed through regional and subregional cooperation. Such issues or needs could include the following:

- (a) Development and sharing of scientific and technical expertise in areas such as LMO detection, development of norms and standards, etc.;
- (b) Development of common approaches to, and formats for, risk assessment and risk management, including:
 - (i) Cooperation in the implementation of Article 17 of the Protocol on unintentional transboundary movement of LMOs likely to have significant adverse effects on biodiversity and human health, including determination of appropriate responses and initiation of necessary actions, including emergency measures;
 - (ii) Cooperation in environmental LMO monitoring and evaluation.
- (c) Sharing information, experiences and best practices on different issues, including the development and implementation of legislation, LMO decisions, etc.;
- (d) Development of regional and subregional websites and databases;
- (e) Development of criteria for undertaking research on, and addressing, socio-economic considerations;
- (f) Development of regional and subregional biosafety research initiatives, including the collection and sharing of (agro)-ecological baseline data and risk assessments;
- (g) Development of common approaches to public awareness and education;
- (h) Development of common curricula in biosafety for governmental institutions, academic institutions and other stakeholders; and
- (i) Cooperation in academic and in-service training in biosafety, including the development and sharing of training materials, transfer of credits, and exchange of staff and students.

6. Establish a process for identifying biosafety issues that could be addressed through regional and subregional cooperation. This could include the following:

- (a) Be relevant to the majority of countries in the region or subregion;
- (b) Respond to, and cut across, individual country needs;
- (c) Be relevant to assisting countries in meeting their obligations under the Protocol; and

7. Identify institutional mechanisms for promoting regional and subregional cooperation on capacity-building in biosafety. Institutional mechanisms could include, *inter alia*, the following:

(a) Selection of a body or bodies to facilitate regional and subregional cooperation on capacity-building in biosafety.

The following criteria, *inter alia*, should be considered:

- (i) Have a mandate for subregional/regional cooperation and such a mandate should include activities and elements relevant to biosafety;
 - (ii) Have previous experience and a good track record in implementing subregional/regional activities;
 - (iii) Preferably have previous direct or indirect involvement in promoting and catalyzing activities relevant to the implementation of the Protocol or related activities;
 - (iv) Be able to respond to varying needs and levels of capacity in the operational area;
 - (v) Have adequate human, financial, physical infrastructure and technical resources to deploy for biosafety activities so as to ensure sustainability;
 - (vi) Have considerable influence among the participating countries; and
 - (vii) Be able to build and maintain networks with relevant institutions outside of the operational area;
 - (viii) The above criteria should be applied in a flexible manner, taking into account the needs and circumstances of different participating countries, subregions and regions.
- (b) Development of institutional arrangements that could facilitate regional and subregional cooperation in biosafety. These may include, *inter alia*, the following:
- (i) Administrative and decision-making structures;
 - (ii) Coordination mechanisms, including, among others, steering committees;
 - (iii) Working and subject matter groups (including rosters of experts);
 - (iv) Regional and subregional centre(s) of excellence;

- (v) Effective, transparent formal and informal communication systems;
 - (vi) Networks linking national centres or institutions.
- (c) Establishment of regular regional and subregional conferences of ministers responsible for biosafety and/or regional and subregional technical working groups on biosafety, where they do not exist. The functions of such meetings should, *inter alia*, include:
- (i) Identifying and articulating regional and subregional biosafety issues;
 - (ii) Developing long-term regional and subregional policies and strategies;
 - (iii) Developing and prioritizing regional and subregional action plans;
 - (iv) Enhancing regional and subregional cooperation and initiatives in biosafety and biotechnology, as appropriate;
 - (v) Resolving issues likely to hinder the achievement of regional and subregional visions and goals;
 - (vi) Mobilizing resources and promoting partnerships.

8. Establish operational strategies and measures for promoting regional and subregional cooperation on capacity building in biosafety on a case by case basis.

- (a) Operational strategies and measures for promoting regional and subregional cooperation on biosafety vary between regions and on a case-by-case basis, depending on the issue(s) being addressed. They may also vary depending on the phases in development and implementation of national biosafety systems of the participating countries. Strategies and measures that could be pursued include, *inter alia*, the following:
- (i) Collaboration through regional and subregional initiatives (including projects and programmes);
 - (ii) Enhancement of coordination and cooperation among relevant national government agencies in the formulation and implementation of policies and regional and subregional initiatives;
 - (iii) Strengthening of mechanisms for fostering coordination and collaboration among different regional and subregional partners;
 - (iv) Establishment of regional and subregional regulatory frameworks and procedures;
 - (v) Training on technical issues;
 - (vi) Developing and testing best practices;
 - (vii) Public education and awareness-raising;
 - (viii) Sharing of information and knowledge and learning from each others' experiences, strengths and weaknesses;

- (ix) Exchanges of experts, for example through short-term attachments, internships or fellowships.
- (b) Other mechanisms that may be employed to enhance regional and subregional cooperation in biosafety include, *inter alia*, the following:
 - (i) Use of existing regional and subregional bodies, including: United Nations regional economic commissions, regional and subregional economic integration organizations, as well as research and development organizations or centres of excellence to help in fostering the exchange of information and expertise and undertaking regional and subregional activities in biosafety;
 - (ii) Creation or strengthening of regional and subregional centres of excellence, which could be mobilized to support countries in the implementation of the Protocol;
 - (iii) Establishment of regional and subregional Working Groups or coordinating committees on biosafety;
 - (iv) Creation of support networks at the regional and subregional levels to facilitate collaboration, sharing of knowledge and experience and ongoing interaction between experts in the regions;
 - (v) Establishment of regional and subregional rosters of biosafety experts to mobilize and effectively use existing expertise within participating countries;
 - (vi) Exchanges of experts in order to enhance professional cohesion among countries and organizations in a region, for example through cross-border exchanges of experts;
 - (vii) Establishment of regional and subregional biosafety information centres, databases or regional and subregional nodes of the Biosafety Clearing-House;
 - (viii) Publication of regional and subregional newsletters or appropriate information exchange tools and mechanisms to facilitate dissemination of regional news;
 - (ix) Organization of regional and subregional seminars and workshops that would provide useful forums for networking and sharing of experiences;
 - (x) Organization of regional and subregional courses, fellowships and study tours to enhance the skills of biosafety policy-makers and practitioners in a region;
 - (xi) Exchanges of experiences and best practices in developing regional and subregional training and public awareness programmes;
 - (xii) Development of exchange programmes with regional and subregional centres and institutions in other regions;
 - (xiii) Mobilization of funding for regional and subregional activities, including training, exchanges of scientists, conducting assessments and exchanges of information including, where feasible, the establishment of regional and subregional funds for technical cooperation in biosafety;

- (xiv) Identifying and sharing information on funding opportunities for regional and subregional initiatives;
- (xv) Conducting joint risk assessments and post-release field monitoring of LMOs and policy analyses to demonstrate the applicability of regional and subregional approaches to biosafety regulations and practices;
- (xvi) Development of regional and subregional policy frameworks, guidelines or operational procedures on common biosafety issues relevant to the effective implementation of the Protocol.

(c) For effective regional and subregional cooperation efforts, it is important to put in place mechanisms to facilitate the sharing of information on capacity-building initiatives in any given region. Partly because its focus is limited to the Biosafety Protocol, the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) may not be sufficient to address the unique circumstances of different regions/subregions. Accordingly, countries should consider developing regional and subregional biosafety websites and databases.

(d) Establishment and sustainability of regional and subregional mechanisms should not rely solely on external funding. They should, as much as possible, be funded from sustainable local funding sources.

*Annex IV***ACTION POINTS FOR ADVANCING CAPACITY-BUILDING IN RISK ASSESSMENT AND POST-RELEASE MONITORING OF LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS****A. Action Points for Capacity-building for Environmental Risk Assessment**

Action Points	Capacity Building for Risk Assessment					
	Immediate Tasks			Ensuring Sustainability		
	National	(Sub)Regional	Global	National	(Sub)Regional	Global
Category A: Scientific capabilities						
Development of core scientific capabilities for evaluation, risk management and inspection	X	X	X	X	X	X
Facilitation of access to data and information on risk assessments of new LMO releases	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hands-on training for scientists (applicants), regulators, field trial managers and inspectors	X			X		
Development of long term educational programmes (e.g. PhD and Masters programmes)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Development of procedures and criteria for LMO risk assessment and standards for LMO detection and quantification	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promotion of synergies between research institutions in carrying out risk assessments		X	X		X	X
Establishment of subregional networks of experts on risk assessment and risk management		X			X	

Linking of biosafety capacity-building efforts to capacity development in other sectors, including agriculture, health and science and technology	x			x		
Establishment and/or strengthening of partnerships between academia, private sector and government institutions	x			x		
Facilitation of access to the Internet services, databases and information in local languages	x			x		
Facilitation of access to baseline data on the specific local receiving environments	x			x		
Establishment of e-forums to discuss topical issues and challenges	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sharing of knowledge of specific fragile and rich biodiversity ecosystems and susceptible to natural disasters	x	x		x		
Category B: Institutional arrangements or procedures						
Development of infrastructure for testing, evaluation and risk assessment of LMOs	x			x		
Public awareness creation and public participation processes (including sharing of best practices and experiences)	x			x		
Development of guidelines	x			x		
Promotion of synergies between research institutions in carrying out risk assessments		x	x		x	x
Improvement of the common format for risk assessment summaries submitted to the BCH			x			x
Establishment of subregional networks of experts on risk assessment and risk management		x			x	
Linking biosafety capacity-building efforts to capacity development in other sectors, including agriculture, health and science and technology	x			x		
Establishment and strengthening of partnerships between academia and government institutions	x			x		
Harmonization of risk assessment standards		x			x	
Building public confidence in the regulatory systems by ensuring transparency and accountability	x			x		

Organizing training workshops for policy makers, regulators, risk-management officials, journalists and members of national biosafety committees to enable them gain an understanding of the basic principles, steps and requirements of risk assessment	x			x		
Designing different training packages for specific targeted audiences						
Category C: Information management						
Ensuring adequate internet access ³	x					
Facilitating access to scientific databases ⁴	x					
Analysis of risk assessments results (for a common GMO)						x
Training to foster comprehension of the risk assessment common formats and procedures for registering information in the BCH, with particular focus on registering risk assessment summaries	x	x	x			
Collection, management, publication and facilitation of access to baseline information on receiving environment in particular centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity ⁵	x	x	x	x	x	x
Compilation and publication biological documents (e.g. botanic files) on BCH ⁶				x	x	x
Collect and make searchable through BCH the guidance tools and materials for risk assessment and risk management			x			
Exchange of relevant risk assessment information through workshops, national databases and forums	x	x				
Facilitate identification and utilisation of local expertise through national BCH websites	x					
Ongoing training in the use of the BCH to access information on risk assessment and risk management	x	x		x	x	
Category D: Determining national objectives						
Establishment of country baselines for biosafety resources	x					

³ This is crucial for accessing and downloading information from BCH in a timely manner e.g. 512 kpbs and up (each access point).

⁴ Examples of existing scientific databases include: Springer, Elsevier, etc. The Secretariat should liaise with major publishers and find a way to make publications available to risk assessors in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

⁵ Such information would include: the taxonomy, ecology and distribution of wild relatives.

⁶ The Secretariat should liaise with relevant organizations such as OECD , GBIF, FAO and AIC to obtain such information.

Undertaking of comprehensive capacity building needs assessments and defining specific national priorities	x					
Development of action plans on capacity building for risk assessment and risk management, containing prioritized activities and sustainability matrices	x					
Establishment and strengthening of partnership between academia and government institutions	x					
There is a need to strengthen capacity building at national level. In doing so, it is important to approach their needs and priorities through specific seminars and workshops to prepare a National Action Plan to reach adequate capacity levels for risk assessment.						

B. Action points for capacity-building for post-release monitoring of LMOs

Action Points	Capacity Building for Post-Release Monitoring					
	Immediate Tasks			Ensuring Sustainability		
	National	(Sub)Regional	Global	National	(Sub)Regional	Global
Category A: Scientific capabilities						
Training of local experts	x			x		
Training of trainers	x			x		
Use of existing regional human resources (e.g. through staff exchange)	x			x		
Establishment and use of national rosters of experts	x	x		x	x	
Organization of workshops for non experts (policy makers, farmers etc)				x		
Identification and dissemination of existing training/resource materials and guidance documents on post-release monitoring of LMOs, and their translation into local languages	x	x		x	x	
Encouraging universities and other training institutions to include post-release monitoring of LMOs into their biosafety and biotechnology programmes	x	x		x	x	
Promotion of research exchanges and scholarship/fellowship programmes	x			x		
Category B: Institutional arrangements or procedures						

Development of harmonized frameworks for post-release monitoring		x			x	
Mobilization of financial resources and technical support for capacity-building in post-release monitoring	x	x	x	x	x	x
Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure to support post-release monitoring of LMOs	x					
Category C: Information management						
Gathering and exchange of data and information relevant to post-release monitoring of LMOs	x	x		x	x	
Development and update of guidance materials, such as manuals, on post-release monitoring	x					
Submission and regular update of post-release monitoring data to the database established in Biosafety Clearing-House	x			x		
Category D: Determining national objectives						
Undertaking capacity-building needs assessments and defining national priorities with respect to post-release monitoring of LMOs	x					
Development of capacity-building action plans for post-release monitoring of LMOs	x					
Establishment and strengthening of partnership between academia and government institutions on research for post-release monitoring of LMOs	x					

REPORT OF THE SIXTH COORDINATION MEETING FOR GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLEMENTING OR FUNDING BIOSAFETY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES ^{7/}

I. INTRODUCTION

53. The sixth Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity-Building Activities was held from 1 to 3 February 2010 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. It was hosted by the Government of Cambodia, through the Ministry of Environment. The Government of Norway provided financial support for some of the participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to attend the meeting.

54. The meeting was attended by 35 participants from 17 Governments and 10 organizations. The countries represented were: Austria, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, India, Liberia, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Namibia, Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, United States of America and Vietnam. The organizations were: Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology, Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics, ECOROPA, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), McGill University, United Nations Environment Programme-Global Environment Facility (UNEP/GEF) and Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina. The full list of participants is contained in annex II to this report.

55. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- (a) Share information and experiences regarding biosafety capacity-building initiatives;
- (b) Consider possibilities for cooperation in identifying needs for capacity-building among Parties for research and information exchange on socio economic impacts of living modified organisms, taking into account experiences from different countries.
- (c) Discuss possible actions and guidance to assist Parties and other governments in building their capacities for promoting public awareness, education and participation regarding living modified organisms.
- (d) Contribute to the development of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020) and the framework for the second assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol, including its procedures and annexes.

II. MEETING PROCEEDINGS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

56. The meeting was opened by H.E. Dr. Mok Mareth, Senior Minister for the Environment of Cambodia. In his remarks, Dr. Mareth welcomed the participants to his country and thanked the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for accepting the Government's offer to host the meeting in Cambodia back-to-back with the seventh meeting of the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building

^{7/} This report has also been published as document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/6/2.

in Biosafety. Dr. Mareth noted that the two meetings would be discussing issues that were critical to ensuring the safe use of modern biotechnology. He observed that many countries had expressed concerns about the potential risks of living modified organisms and products on the environment and the health of humans and animals while also recognizing the potential benefits of applying modern biotechnology in different sectors especially in agriculture. In that regard, he highlighted the need to strengthen the capacities of countries to be able to make appropriate decisions.

57. Dr. Mareth reported that the Royal Government of Cambodia had enacted a national biosafety law in February 2008 and had undertaken, with support from UNEP/GEF, capacity-building activities with regard to the detection of living modified organisms, risk assessment, public awareness and participation and enhancement of the national Biosafety Clearing-House node. He noted that additional financial support was needed to build national capacity for taking into account socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms and for handling liability and redress issues at the national level. He further noted that Cambodia wished to learn from other countries about risk assessment and the safe means of using genetically modified animals for the development of its economy while protecting the environment. Dr. Mareth strongly urged the meeting to explore options for strengthening the capacities of developing assist countries to address the above issues. He welcomed the draft Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and urged participants to critically review and provide comments to enhance its quality and effectiveness in guiding the future implementation of the Protocol.

58. Opening remarks were also made by H.E. Sang Riha, Vice Governor of Siem Reap Province, and Mr. Charles Gbedemah on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

59. In his remarks, Mr. Riha welcomed the participants to Siem Reap, the province of tourism, culture and great nature. He noted that after gaining peace and political stability the Kingdom of Cambodia had become a major tourist destination. In that regard, the Royal Government of Cambodia had established an open-sky policy and initiated a number of other measures to promote the contribution of the tourism sector to national socio-economic development. At the same time, the Government had paid serious attention to the environmental issues associated with economic development activities, especially in the agricultural sector. For example, the Government was implementing policies to reduce the use of chemicals, including pesticides and herbicides and persistent organic pollutants, which could adversely affect human health and environment and harm the tourism industry. He expressed the hope that Cambodia would also catch up with other countries to ensure the safe use of living modified organisms.

60. In the statement read on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Gbedemah thanked the Royal Government of Cambodia for co-organizing and hosting the meeting. He also thanked the Government of Norway for providing financial support, which had enabled the participation of some of the developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Mr. Gbedemah noted that more than 10 years since the Protocol had been adopted, many countries still lacked the capacity to effectively implement its provisions. He underlined the need for more concerted efforts to address this challenge. Mr. Gbedemah underscored the important role that the coordination meetings had played to date in facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experiences among stakeholders involved in capacity-building for biosafety and in the development of guidance for enhancing capacity-building efforts on specific issues. He noted that the current meeting would focus on capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making and for promoting public awareness, education and participation concerning living modified organisms. The meeting would also provide input into the draft Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the

framework for the second assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol. In conclusion, Mr. Gbedemah recognized the contributions made by Dr. Pisey Oum of the Ministry of Environment and his team in organizing the meeting. He also thanked members of the Steering Committee for their guidance and support.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

61. After the opening session of the meeting, participants elected Mr. Hartmut Meyer (Germany) to serve as Chairperson of the meeting and Ms. Francisca Acevedo Gasman (Mexico) to serve as Rapporteur.

62. Participants then adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/6/1), developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Steering Committee:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1. Election of officers;
 - 2.2. Adoption of the agenda;
 - 2.4. Organization of work.
3. Standing agenda items:
 - 3.4 Updates on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity building projects/initiatives;
 - 3.5 Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meeting and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;
4. Issues for in-depth consideration:
 - 4.1. Capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms;
 - 4.2. Capacity-building for promoting public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.
 - 4.3. Consideration of the draft Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020) and the draft framework for the second assessment and review of the Protocol.
5. Other matters.
6. Conclusions and recommendations.
7. Closure of the meeting.

63. The meeting also adopted the organization of work for the meeting, as contained in annex I to the present report. Participants agreed to discuss agenda item 3.2 (Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meeting and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol) and after taking up agenda items 4.1 and 4.2. Under agenda item 4, they agreed to start the discussions with sub-item 4.2 (Capacity-building for

promoting public awareness, education and participation) because one of the participants supposed to make a presentation under item 4.1 would be arriving late.

ITEM 3. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

3.1. Update on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building activities

64. Under this agenda item, 25 participants made short presentations on their recent and ongoing biosafety capacity-building activities. Participants who had not yet done so were invited to provide written submissions to the Secretariat about their activities for inclusion in the information document (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/6/INF/1) which would be posted on the webpage for the meeting (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=BSCMCB-06>).

3.2. Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meeting and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

65. Under this agenda item, the participants reviewed and adopted the “Interim Guiding Framework for Promoting Synergies and Complementarities Between Biosafety Capacity-Building Initiatives at the Country Level”, and the “Draft Guidance on Promoting Regional and Subregional Initiatives and Approaches to Capacity-Building in Biosafety” contained in the report of the fifth coordination meeting (UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/4). It was agreed that these two documents would be published as part of the CBD Secretariat Technical Series on Biosafety.

66. The participants also reviewed the matrices of action points for advancing capacity-building in environmental risk assessment and for post-release monitoring of living modified organisms and agreed to submit them to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties of the Protocol for its consideration. It was also agreed that the action points would be reviewed and further developed, if necessary, after the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on risk assessment and risk management has completed its work.

ITEM 4. ISSUES FOR IN-DEPTH CONSIDERATION

4.1. Capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms

67. Under this agenda item, participants heard two presentations, one by Dr. Paul Thomassin from McGill University and another by Ms. Lucy Naydenova from the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment.

68. Dr. Thomassin presented a summary of the results of a “Survey on the Application of and Experience in the Use of Socio-Economic Considerations in Decision-Making on Living Modified Organisms” which had been conducted by the Convention Secretariat and UNEP-GEF between 6 October and 13 November 2009. The presentation focused on the aspects relating to capacity-building. Dr. Thomassin reported that a total of 578 respondents from 154 countries completed the survey. A lack of capacity was ranked as the second most important reason why socio-economic considerations were not taken into account when making decisions concerning LMOs, after “lack of mechanisms” for doing so. Sixty-four per cent of the respondents said that they did not have the capacity to undertake socio-economic assessments. The respondents ranked the following as the top ten socio-economic assessment areas in which capacity-building was required: food security; impacts on

market access and trade; macroeconomic impacts; impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; coexistence of LMOs with conventional and organic agriculture; compliance with biosafety measures (including institutional costs); health-related impacts; impact on indigenous and local communities; microeconomic impacts; and Farmers' Rights (e.g. control of seeds). Furthermore, a majority of respondents (84%) indicated that a methodology guide or toolkit would be a useful document to assist countries in taking account socio-economic considerations in their decision-making concerning LMOs. Many respondents mentioned the following as the most important elements that should be included in such a guide: cost effectiveness assessment; macroeconomic impact assessment; cultural and ethical assessment; property rights assessment; community-impact analysis; benefit-cost assessment; and economic risk assessment. In conclusion, Dr. Thomassin noted that the survey results clearly highlighted a need for capacity-building in the area of socio-economic considerations. He suggested that development of a methodological toolkit or guide would be a good starting point to build that capacity.

69. Ms. Naydenova presented a summary of The Netherlands Commission on Genetic Modification (COGEM) report on socio-economic criteria for the application of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in agriculture and the outcomes of the Conference on GMOs in European Agriculture and Food Production, which was held in The Hague on 25-26 November 2009. One of the main objectives of the Conference was to exchange information and build a common knowledge base on the socio-economic aspects of the use of GMOs in European agriculture and food production. Ms. Naydenova reported that COGEM formulated nine criteria which could serve as building blocks in the assessment of the socio-economic and sustainability aspects of GMOs.⁸ These include: benefit to society; economics and prosperity; people's health and welfare; local and general food supply; cultural heritage; freedom of choice; safety of humans and the environment; biodiversity; and environmental quality. She reported that some ministers who attended the ministerial roundtable expressed support for the nine criteria and others had reservations or needed more time to study them. The ministerial roundtable also noted that the need to promote independent impact studies using appropriate and transparent methodologies and the need for further analysis of the benefits and adverse effects of GMOs.

70. The participants welcomed the two presentations and noted the need for additional case-studies from both developed and developing countries that have taken into account socio-economic considerations. They also underlined the urgent need to develop methodological guidance, including toolkits or guidance documents, which would assist countries in assessing and taking into account socio-economic considerations in decision-making concerning LMOs. Furthermore, some participants recommended that conferences or workshops should be organised for countries that have actually taken into account socioeconomic considerations in decision-making concerning LMOs to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned. It was also suggested that regional online conferences, preferably in the United Nations languages spoken by most countries in the respective regions, should be organized. It was further recommended to organise a side-event on socio-economic considerations during the fifth meeting of the Parties, in Nagoya, to present the results of the survey conducted by the Secretariat and UNEP/GEF and other relevant initiatives.

71. After the presentations and the general discussions in the plenary, participants agreed to draft their recommendations to the fifth meeting of the Parties with a view to supporting the capacity-building of Parties that have decided to include socio-economic considerations in their decision-making on the import of living modified organisms in accordance with Article 26 of the Protocol. Two discussion groups were established to consider possibilities for cooperation in identifying needs for capacity-building among Parties for research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of living modified organisms as requested by the Parties in paragraph 3 of decision BS-IV/16 and draft

⁸ The COGEM study on socio-economic criteria is available at: www.cogem.net.

recommendations on actions that could be taken towards strengthening the capacities of Parties to implement, as appropriate, Article 26 of the Protocol. The recommendations of the two groups, which were further discussed and agreed upon in the plenary, are presented under item 6 below.

4.2. Capacity-building for promoting public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms

72. Under this item, participants heard two presentations, one from Dr. Mercy Kamara, a Research Associate at the Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics, Lancaster University entitled: "Public Participation in Biosafety Regulations and Policies: Lessons from forerunning countries in Africa and in the EU", building upon a study for the Biosafety Capacity-Building Project of the African Union Commission and GTZ, and another one by Dr. Francisca Acevedo Gasman from the Mexican National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO).

73. Dr. Kamara gave a brief historical background to public participation in environmental policy and decision-making, observing that it was a central component of the 1987 Brundtland report and the 1992 Rio Declaration and many subsequent international, regional and national instruments and processes. She noted that public participation in environmental policies has both hard and soft dimensions. The hard dimension involves putting in place tangible instruments or resources for furthering public participation, including policy statements and legal directives, establishment of institutional systems and infrastructure and disbursement of the necessary resources. The soft dimension involves: communication of information and knowledge through different means (e.g. websites, publications, radio and TV), elicitation of raw or unrefined opinions (e.g. through surveys, or opinion polls) and elicitation of refined opinion, needs, concerns and interests through institutionalized processes (e.g. public-focus group, citizen juries, etc). Dr. Kamara described some of the practices and approaches that have been effectively used in recruiting and motivating the public. She also highlighted some of the past mistakes which have been influenced by various factors, including the knowledge deficit (e.g. which assumes the public does not understand), attitude deficit (which assumes that the public is opposed or does not appreciate) and dialogue and trust deficit (which assumes that the public is ambivalent due to a lack of dialogue). Furthermore, she outlined some lessons that may be learned from previous experiences, including the need to listen to and to understand the public, as well as the need for institutional reflection, learning, and acceptance of different forms of knowledge. In terms of capacity-building, she emphasized the need to build and strengthen:

- (a) Legal, institutional, and economic foundations for public participation;
- (b) Science communication skills and mutual learning infrastructures;
- (c) Social intelligence skills (including the ability to listen, respect, understand, & recognize the public, and their diverse forms of knowledge and knowing); and
- (d) Motivational skills and motivating environments.

74. In her presentation, Dr. Gasman made reference to a number of key points and lessons highlighted in the July 2009 edition of the *Biosafety Protocol News* published by the Secretariat, including the need for countries to encourage public debate concerning living modified organisms and to adapt communication methods and participatory approaches to fit their own institutional, cultural, social and economic conditions. She shared experiences from her organization, CONABIO, including the need for:

- (a) Developing tools to make information easily accessible to the public,

(b) Fostering debate and a common language to facilitate common understanding of biosafety issues by different actors, and

(c) Fostering information generation for better decision-making.

75. After a brief general discussion in the plenary, three discussion groups were established to address the following issues:

(a) Public awareness and education;

(b) Public access to information;

(c) Public participation.

76. Each group identified specific capacity-building needs and challenges and proposed possible solutions to address the identified needs. The results of the three groups, which were presented and further developed during the plenary session, are contained in annex II below.

77. A small drafting group was established to develop recommendations, which were discussed and agreed upon in the plenary under item 6 on conclusions and recommendations. The participants invited the Liaison Group meeting and the Secretariat to take into account the relevant recommendations in the further development of the draft programme of work on public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.

4.3. Consideration of the draft Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020) and the draft framework for the second assessment and review of the Protocol

78. Under this item, participants reviewed and proposed a number of specific improvements to the draft Strategic Plan and the draft framework for the second assessment and review.

79. With regard to the draft Strategic Plan the participants recommended, among other things, that the indicators should be revised to make them more specific and measurable in all cases. They also recommended that the underlying assumptions made while developing the draft Strategic Plan should be made explicit in the introduction section of the document. The Chairperson noted that the suggestions made would be taken up by the Liaison Group meeting, which was to take place on 4-5 February.

ITEM 5. OTHER MATTERS

A. *Study of Biosafety Clearing-House Users and Potential Users*

80. Under this agenda item, Dr. Aleksej Tarasjev made a presentation on the “Study of Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) Users and Potential Users” commissioned by the Secretariat pursuant to paragraph 8 of decision BS-IV/2. The goals of the Study were to: (a) assess what information users and potential users of the Biosafety Clearing-House would find useful; and (b) prioritize the work programme of the Biosafety Clearing-House in order to focus the efforts of the Secretariat on making the Biosafety Clearing-House a useful tool. Dr. Tarasjev noted that the study consisted of an online survey (questionnaire), targeted semi-structured Interview and analysis of existing materials. He described the format and structure of the survey and invited participants to take part in the survey before its completion on 8 February 2010.

B. *Election of Steering Committee members*

81. The participants elected Dr. Ossama Abdel-Kawy (Egypt) to serve on the steering committee as the representative for the African region for one year and Dr. David Duthie (UNEP/GEF) as the representative for United Nations agencies, replacing the late Dr. Fee-Chon Low. The slot for a representative of donors on the steering committee remained unfulfilled due to the fact no participant from donor agencies attended the meeting. The Secretariat was requested to send letters to bilateral and multilateral donor agencies encouraging them to attend future coordination meetings.

C. *Programme of the next coordination meeting*

82. The participants agreed to address the following issues at the next coordination meeting:

- (a) Capacity-building for enforcement of national regulatory frameworks;
- (b) Capacity-building for handling issues relating to liability and redress issues for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms at the national level, if the fifth meeting of the Parties adopts the international rules and procedures, or
- (c) Capacity-building in risk assessment of genetically modified animals.

D. *Date and venue of the next coordination meeting*

83. The participant from the Republic of Moldova expressed her country’s interest in hosting the next coordination meeting and offered to make further consultations with the relevant authorities and inform the Secretariat in due course of the final decision. The participants from the Czech Republic and the Netherlands also expressed their interest in hosting the meeting in the event that the Republic of Moldova is unable to do so. The participants welcomed the tentative offers and agreed to hold the next meeting in the first quarter of 2011.

ITEM 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

84. The recommendations of the meeting focused on the following two substantive issues:

- (a) Capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms; and

(b) Capacity-building for promoting public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.

A. *Capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms*

85. With regard to capacity-building and socio-economic considerations, participants welcomed the results of the survey on the application of and experience in the use of socio-economic considerations in decision-making on living modified organisms (document UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/6/INF/2). It was recommended that:

(a) The final report of the survey be made available to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol as an information document;

(b) Further analysis of the survey data be undertaken to examine, *inter alia*, the difference in responses between the various regions and also between developed and developing countries, and to identify any region-specific experiences, issues and needs;

(c) Case studies be developed to document experiences and lessons learned from different regions with regard to the integration of socio-economic considerations in decision-making concerning living modified organisms; and

(d) A methodological toolkit or guide on socio-economic considerations be developed to assist decision-making authorities and those responsible for conducting and evaluating socio-economic assessments concerning living modified organisms.

86. For the purposes of enhancing cooperation in identifying capacity-building needs among Parties for research and information exchange on socio-economic considerations and to facilitate further consideration of Article 26 of the Protocol, the coordination meeting recommended that the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, at their fifth meeting, decide to:

(a) Invite Parties to submit to the Executive Secretary and the Biosafety Clearing-House their capacity building needs and priorities regarding socio-economic considerations within six months of the close of fifth meeting of the Parties;

(b) Request the Executive Secretary to establish an online forum, preferably in different United Nations languages, to facilitate exchange views, information and experiences on socio-economic considerations;

(c) Establish an Ad Hoc Expert Group on Socio-Economic Considerations in accordance with the terms of reference set out below;

(d) Invite Parties, other Governments and relevant international organizations to submit to the Executive Secretary relevant information regarding socio-economic considerations, including guidance material on socio-economic considerations and case studies on, *inter alia*, institutional arrangements and best practices;

(e) Invite Parties, in collaboration with regional bodies and relevant organizations, to organize regional workshops to facilitate sharing of information and experiences regarding socio-economic considerations.

Terms of reference for the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Socio-Economic Considerations

1. The Ad Hoc Expert Group on Socio-Economic Considerations shall:

(a) Elaborate possible elements of socioeconomic considerations in the context of Article 26 of the Protocol;

(b) Develop criteria that could assist Parties in determining which socio-economic considerations they wish to include in their decision-making frameworks;

(c) Develop a guidance document on ways in which socio-economic issues could be considered in the decision making process on LMOs with a view to enable the development of training for socio-economic considerations;

(d) Meet twice, pending availability of funds, prior to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol and perform necessary tasks between the two meetings to achieve the proposed outcomes outlined herein;

(e) Include experts selected on the basis of their expertise on the issues relevant for the mandate of the Group, based on a standardized common format for submission of CVs from experts nominated by Parties, respecting geographical representation, in accordance with the consolidated modus operandi of the SBSTTA of the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision VIII/10 of the Conference of the Parties, annex III); and

(f) Include observers in accordance with the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

2. The deliberations of the Ad Hoc Expert Group shall take into account:

(g) Submissions from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations; and

(h) Any other relevant materials made available by the Secretariat.

B. Capacity-building for promoting public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms

87. With regard to capacity-building for promoting public awareness, education and participation, the Coordination meeting recommends that the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, at its fifth meeting, decides to urge Parties, as part of implementing the programme of work on public awareness, education and participation, to:

General

(a) Develop legal frameworks to fulfil their obligation under Article 23 on public Awareness and participation;

(b) Establish responsible administrative bodies for implementing Article 23;

(c) Earmark reasonable financial, technical and human resources to implement Article 23;

Public awareness

(d) Carry out public awareness, perception and knowledge baseline surveys and assessments regarding biosafety;

(e) Develop strategic plans on public awareness and education on the basis of the survey results;

(f) Identify biosafety communication experts to develop biosafety materials and information for the general public;

(g) Request national competent authorities to establish systems for communicating biosafety information to the public;

(h) Develop long-term media strategies on biosafety (e.g. including radio, internet, television and newspapers);

(i) Integrate social communication strategies, including popular art and culture.

Public education

(j) Educate trainers in biosafety communication;

(k) Include biosafety in curricula for different levels of formal education;

(l) Develop teaching materials on biosafety as part of informal education to the public;

(m) Encourage and support civil society involvement and collaboration in promoting biosafety public awareness and education;

Public access to information

(n) Inform the public about the rights to, and procedures of access to, biosafety information according to the national laws and regulations and in accordance with the obligations of the Protocol;

(o) Develop necessary infrastructure to facilitate open public access to biosafety information (e.g. websites including national Biosafety Clearing-House nodes);

(p) Designate information units and/or officers responsible for making information available to the public;

(q) Establish, improve and update biosafety databases;

(r) Develop procedures to make available information in accordance with the obligations of the Protocol, including paragraph 6 of Article 21;

(s) Provide a wide array of objective and balanced biosafety information to the public;

Public participation

(t) Involve the public in the development and review of the legal biosafety frameworks;

(u) Involve the public and civil society organizations in the decision-making process, and ensure that their knowledge, opinions, concerns and interests are taken into account in the final decision;

(v) Establish mechanisms for collaboration and sharing of experiences on public participation between countries and regions;

(w) Develop procedures, methods and mechanisms for public participation in biosafety decision-making processes; and

(x) Provide funding for public involvement in the decision making process.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

88. In the afternoon of the last day, the participants reviewed and adopted the draft report of the meeting covering the proceedings of the previous two days. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Chair and Rapporteur, was requested to incorporate proceedings of the last day and send the final draft to all participants for comments.

89. The meeting ended at 6.10 p.m on Wednesday, 3 March 2010.

Annex I

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1 February 2010 9 a.m. – 9.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda item:</i> 1. Opening of the meeting.
9.30 a.m. – 10 a.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 2. Organizational matters: 2.1. Election of officers; 2.2. Adoption of the agenda; 2.3. Organization of work.
10 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
10.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 3. Standing agenda items: 3.1. Updates on ongoing and planned biosafety capacity-building projects/initiatives;
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break
2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 3. Standing agenda items: 3.2. Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of previous coordination meeting and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.
3.30 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
4 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 4. Issues for in-depth consideration: 4.1. Capacity-building for addressing socio-economic considerations in decision-making regarding living modified organisms.
2 February 2010 9 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda item 4.1 (continued):</i> Group discussions on item 4.1
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 4.2. Capacity-building in public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms.
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break
2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	<i>Agenda item 4.2 (continued)</i> Group discussions on item 4.2
3.30 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Coffee/Tea Break

4 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.	4.3 Consideration of the draft Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020) and the draft framework for the second assessment and review of the Protocol
3 February 2010 9 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> Consideration of group discussion reports
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	Coffee/Tea Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> Consideration of group discussion reports (<i>continued</i>)
1 p.m. – 2 p.m.	Lunch Break
2 p.m. – 5 p.m.	<i>Agenda items:</i> 5. Other matters 6. Conclusions and recommendations 7. Closure of the meeting.

Annex II

**RESULTS FROM THE DISCUSSION GROUPS ON PUBLIC AWARENESS,
EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION**

GROUP 1: PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Needs and challenges

- There is a need to decide target groups in order to evaluate their level of awareness.
- Identify what is the level of awareness in the country regarding biosafety?
- Identify specific needs in order to address them (Have a need assessment).
- How that need can be addressed in order to communicate clearly and effectively.
- How to have a credible way to communicate (credibility of the communicator)?
- Issues to consider: language differences in the country, the material, the access to the channel of information, level of education, cultural differences within the country, infrastructure, policy.

How to address them

- Political willingness, national agenda, and commitment of resources for public awareness. Use existing local sources such as teachers, internet and radio.
- Integrate biosafety into the channels the society uses to communicate its information.
- Create capacity among communicators, training the media.
- Train the trainers regarding communication.
- Address population needs with the best channel of information depending on the specific target group (Radio, internet, Television)

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Needs and challenges

- How to include or integrate biosafety in the curricula of different levels of formal education: primary or basic, secondary and university (curricula development).
- People who are not capable of getting into formal education programs. How to facilitate objective information through informal education channels. Seminars, brochures, workshops, papers. Feedback of the programs and identify needs in order to develop effective programs.
- How to collect objective and adequate teaching material and information sources depending on the education level (primary, secondary, university), or informal programmes.
- Considering that education is a process, it should be considering a long term strategy to impact future generations.
- Country with limited sources unable to meet co-financing requirements regarding access to international sources of funding, such as GEF.

How to address them

- Political willingness, national agenda, and commitment of resources. Use the existing local sources to address education.
- Incorporate biosafety into the curricula.
- International cooperation, material and information transfer for teachers.
- Create capacity among teachers (train the trainers).

GROUP 2: PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Challenges	Ways to address them
Information is not always available due to several reasons including: a) Confidential business information (CBI) b) lack of infrastructure c) sorting of information d) lack of clarity of competent authorities e) databases not up to date and/or not fully filled	Work on identifying CBI and sorting out information to make the non CBI accessible Create the necessary infrastructure Capacity building on roads to making information accessible targeted to competent authorities Improvement and updating of existing and relevant databases (including the BCH)
Information readily available in relation to how to access information and the type of information available	Capacity-building on how to access the information and what type is there accessible
Information needs to be of high quality , scientific relevant data	Compile and make available high quality data and scientifically relevant
A legal system in place that takes into account public access and its relation to CBI	Put legal system that includes aspects on public access to information, that identifies clearly what is not CBI information (reference to Article 21, para. 6) and how is CBI information treated with respect to CBI information
Information to be accessed has a complex nature due to the number of disciplines involved in biosafety	Interdisciplinary nature of information can provide room for information management in a simpler and more digested manner
A prerequisite to public access of information is awareness	Making public aware of its rights to information access through capacity-building

The group suggests that the Parties at their fifth meeting decide to develop guidelines for implementing Article 23 of the Protocol. It was noted that The Aarhus Convention has “Guidelines on access to information, public participation and access to justice with respect to genetically modified organisms, which could be studied and utilized, as appropriate, by Parties to the Protocol.

GROUP III: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

<i>Needs</i>	<i>Challenges</i>	<i>How to address those needs</i>
Enacting biosafety acts that provide for public participation, and establishment of administrative institutions	Political/policy cultures and traditions that are undemocratic	Raising the awareness/ acknowledgement that lay public possess distinctive or locally essential knowledge that experts may not have, and that this lay knowledge can improve biosafety decisions.
Involving all stakeholders (civil society, environmental, consumer, farmers, or industrial groups, etc), and the ordinary public, as individual citizens	Getting people interested and activated	Raising awareness through media and civil society. The media and civil society must be accountable and responsible. Looking for existing mechanisms for public participation that works, and getting inspiration from other countries.
Ensuring that the publics' opinions, concerns, fears, and interests are taken into account in the final decision-making process	Creating mechanism for it to happen	Looking for existing mechanisms for public participation that works, and getting inspiration from other countries.
Facilitate effective public participation	Creating an open and transparent public engagement process; Creating well facilitated, credible, and supported forums for public participation	Information sharing, improving transparency, improving communication mediums that already exist, or developing new mediums Looking for existing mechanisms that works, and getting inspiration from other countries Training or hiring highly qualified and credible facilitators
Balanced and objective information	Finding mechanism for independent review	Funding of independent research/and research review; Seeking knowledge from diverse scientific sources and perspectives
Funding for public participation work	Creating new funding sources, for example, charging fees for application, Introducing biosafety in other sectoral plans and programs of the government, and exploring if Biosafety could be included in the state budget	
