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PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

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Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE ACTION PLAN  
FOR BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. In its decision BS-V/3, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) endorsed the terms of reference for the comprehensive review of the updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol. It also invited Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit relevant information, views and suggestions to facilitate the review process. As part of the review process, the Executive Secretary was also requested to commission an independent evaluation of the Action Plan. The overall objective of the review is to improve the Action Plan to ensure that it is relevant and effective in providing a coherent framework for capacity-building efforts under the Protocol, taking into account the needs and priorities of Parties and other Governments, and also ensuring its consistency with the new Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020).
2. The Executive Secretary is pleased to circulate herewith, for the information of participants in the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, the report entitled "Independent Evaluation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety", prepared by the consultant commissioned by the Secretariat.
3. The report is being made available in the form and language in which it was received by the Executive Secretary.

\* UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/6/1.

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# **Independent Evaluation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**

Evaluation Report

**Requested by:**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
United Nations Environment Programme

9 May 2012

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## Acronyms

AIA	Advance Informed Agreement
BCH	Biosafety Clearing-House
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
COP-MOP	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CPB	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GRULAC	Latin America and Caribbean Group
LMO	Living Modified Organisms
NBF	National Biosafety Framework
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WEOG	Western Europe and Others Group

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) seeks to *contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account the risks to human health, and specifically focussing on transboundary movements*. The Protocol entered into force on 11 September 2003 and to date it has 163 Parties.

In its decision BS-III/3, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) adopted an Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol and decided that a comprehensive review of the Action Plan would be conducted every five years, based on an independent evaluation of the effectiveness and outcomes of the capacity-building initiatives undertaken to support its implementation. The purpose of the independent evaluation is threefold:

- to assess the progress made with the implementation of the Action Plan for Biosafety, including the main achievements and shortcomings;
- to review its relevance and effectiveness in guiding and facilitating capacity-building efforts; and
- to make recommendations to improve its content and implementation, in line with the new Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 2011-2020 (in which one of the five strategic objectives is to further develop and strengthen the capacity of Parties to implement the Protocol).

The following are some of the overall findings and lessons learned with regard to the implementation of the Action Plan:

### *Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan*

In general, progress has been made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan. A number of initiatives aimed at contributing to the development and strengthening of capacities in biosafety have been implemented in various countries. In their second national reports on the implementation of the Protocol, 119 Parties (83 per cent) have stated that they have undertaken capacity-building activities in biosafety and only 24 Parties (17 per cent) stated that they have not done so. A large number of Parties reported that they have undertaken activities with respect to the following elements of the Action Plan: institutional capacity (84 Parties); human resources capacity and training (88); public awareness, participation and education in biosafety (90); information exchange and data management (88); risk assessment (70); and identification of living modified organisms (LMOs) including their detection (62 Parties). However, very few activities have been undertaken under the following elements: handling of confidential information, technology transfer, implementation of documentation requirements and socio-economic considerations. With regard to risk assessment, 63 Parties (45% of the respondents) reported that they have acquired the necessary domestic capacity to conduct risk assessment, 56 Parties (39%) have established a mechanism for training national experts to conduct risk assessments, 95 Parties (67%) have established a mechanism for conducting risk assessments prior to taking decisions regarding LMOs, and 70 Parties (50%) reported that they have established guidelines for doing so.

### *Relevance of the Action Plan*

According to the interviewees and the survey respondents, the current Action Plan is a relevant and useful tool for guiding the efforts of Parties in building their capacities for implementation of the Protocol. A number of respondents noted that in the absence of the Action Plan, there might have been a less focussed approach to capacity-building and limited dialogue on issues regarding capacity-building under the Protocol.

However the Action Plan has been less relevant for donors who tend to provide funding based on their own priorities and areas of expertise.

The second national reports revealed that only 37 Parties (28 per cent) have developed a national capacity-building strategy and 96 Parties (72 per cent) have not done so. Yet, 115 Parties (80 per cent) stated that they still have many capacity-building needs, 11 Parties (8 per cent) said they have a few more needs and only 18 Parties (12 per cent), 14 of which are from WEOG, stated that they did not have capacity-building needs. Therefore the Action Plan is still a relevant tool for most Parties that do not yet have a national capacity-building strategy in place.

Many interviewees and respondents also noted that while the Strategic Plan for the Protocol 2011-2020 includes elements for a more results-oriented strategic approach to capacity-building it does not undermine the relevance of the more comprehensive Action Plan. However, the Action Plan would need to be updated in so that it is in line with the new Strategic Plan and the emerging needs of Parties.

#### *Effectiveness of the Action Plan*

The Action Plan has been effective to varying degrees in guiding and supporting biosafety capacity-building activities at the national, regional, and international levels. There have been a number of initiatives developed and undertaken in line with the Action Plan. These include projects on the development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks (NBFs) funded by the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and some projects undertaken by various regional and international organizations. However, there is limited evidence indicating that the Action Plan has been effective in guiding the planning or implementation of biosafety projects supported by bilateral and multilateral donors. Many donors and some organizations seem to have supported biosafety activities based on their own priorities without taking into account the Action Plan.

Most of the global-level activities specified in the Action Plan have been effective. Notably, the Biosafety Clearing-House is now fully functional and serving as an effective tool for information exchange. The Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the Action Plan has been effective in facilitating the sharing of information and experiences on biosafety capacity-building initiatives, through the capacity-building databases in the BCH, the coordination meetings and the online forum established in the BCH. The coordination meetings have provided a useful forum for key stakeholders to build relations, share information and experiences and exchange ideas on how to improve capacity-building for specific issues. However, some interviewees have noted that the level of participation in the coordination meetings has declined and in particular donor agencies have not actively taken part in them and this has partly undermined the effectiveness of the Coordination Mechanism. The Roster of Experts has also been developed and is perceived as a very useful tool though it has not yet been effectively used due to lack of funds to enable eligible Parties to pay for experts selected from the roster.

At the regional and subregional levels, the Action Plan has been effective in guiding the planning and implementation of some initiatives. For example, the African Union Commission (AUC) reported that it used the Action Plan in the design of its Africa-wide biosafety project and the development of its regional strategy on biosafety. A number of regional and subregional initiatives have also been implemented in other in Asia, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the CBD Secretariat has conducted a number of training workshops at the regional level. In general, progress has been made in implementing the Action Plan at the regional level although, overall, capacity-building at this level remains weak. Information gathered from the interviews, the survey and the literature review has shown that a regional approach to capacity-building provides a valuable opportunity for Parties to exchange information, including success stories and lessons learned. It also allows Parties to share technical resources and expertise and to foster coordination and continued dialogue.

At the national level, the Action Plan has been moderately successful in guiding countries. Many interviewees and survey respondents indicated that the Action Plan has provided valuable guidance particularly for Parties at the early stages of capacity development in biosafety. However, for Parties that have advanced biosafety capacity, the Action Plan does not seem to offer much guidance or provide relevant indicative priority areas for consideration. Depending on their needs, some Parties do not undertake biosafety capacity-building activities *per se* but integrate biosafety into broader existing programme and systems.

### *Impact of the Action Plan*

The Action Plan has catalysed a number of activities in various countries and regions. For example respondents from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the African Union Commission stated that the Action Plan has indeed been the catalyst for their Biosafety capacity-building initiatives. The Action Plan has also guided some bilateral donor agencies, such as DANIDA, in planning their funding support for biosafety. The majority of interviewees and survey respondents felt that the Action Plan has inspired a strategic and focused approach to capacity-building and has been used to engage relevant stakeholders and to leverage financial and technical support for biosafety.

### *Design of the Action Plan*

Most interviewees and the survey respondents stated that the design of the Action Plan is generally useful and provides a good basis upon which Parties can determine what capacity-building activities to undertake and how. Most of the components of Action Plan are still valid and useful. However, some of them would need to be updated in light of the emerging needs of Parties and the experience gained. For example, it may be useful to prioritise and arrange the key elements of the Action Plan into administrative and technical elements in order to provide more clarity. As well, it may be necessary to add other key elements, such as liability and redress, which are missing. Section 4 (processes/steps) is a bit vague and outdated. It needs to be revised to provide more clarity and add details under each key process, especially with regard to funding requirements.

In its current form the Action Plan is viewed by many Parties, other governments and organizations more as a reference tool rather than an Action Plan. It outlines general guiding principles and approaches, key areas for which capacity-building action may be required as well as general processes/steps or strategies that governments may be taken into account in designing and implementing their biosafety capacity-building initiatives. However, it does not really serve as a plan of action since it does not include specific prioritised activities to be implemented by specific stakeholders within given timeframes.

The monitoring and coordination component of the Action Plan (section 6) has not been effective. There is little evidence in the documentation reviewed that the indicators for monitoring the Action Plan implementation, which were adopted by the first meeting of the Parties in 2004 and later revised at the fourth meeting, have been used by Parties and organizations. There is a need for a more detailed monitoring framework containing clear indicators linked to the relevant indicators Strategic Plan for the Protocol and well-defined data collection methodology outlining how and where the information will be collected and by whom.

One of the main omissions in the current design of the Action Plan is the lack of measures for ensuring the sustainability of capacity-building initiatives and activities. The Action Plan needs to provide guidance to Parties on possible sustainability strategies that could be incorporated in their capacity-building activities to help ensure long-lasting impacts.

*Challenges to the implementation of the Action Plan*

Lack of funding is a biggest challenge affecting the implementation of the Action Plan. Although in the early years after the adoption of the Protocol a number of biosafety capacity-building activities received funding support from various sources, including multilateral and bilateral organisations, there has been a significant decrease in the amount and diversity of sources of funding available for biosafety in the last few years. According to the second national reports, 41 countries have provided support to other countries for capacity-building. Of these, 21 countries used bilateral channels, 9 countries used regional channels, and 11 countries used multilateral channels. Of the 88 Parties that have reported receiving external support or benefited from collaborative activities with other Parties, 37% of the responses refer to bilateral channels, 23% to regional channels, and 40% to multilateral channels.

The interviews and survey have also revealed that lack of awareness of the Action Plan by some Parties and stakeholders is another challenge that may have affected its implementation. Some National Focal Points indicated that they had never heard of the Action Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the findings from the interviews, the survey results and the review of relevant documents, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. A new document containing the following two major components be developed by the Secretariat for consideration by the COP-MOP to replace the current Action Plan:
  - A Framework for Capacity-Building, based on the current Action Plan, which would serve as a general reference and guidance tool for Parties at different levels of progress in terms of capacity-building for biosafety. Like the current Action Plan, it would highlight the general guiding principles and approaches, key areas for which capacity-building action may be required as well as general processes/steps or strategies that Parties and relevant organizations may take into account in designing and implementing their biosafety capacity-building initiatives at national, regional and international levels. It would also highlight examples of success stories and lessons learned based on available documentation and experiences.
  - A results-based Action Plan for aligned with focal area 2 of the Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and also linked to the main components of National Biosafety Frameworks. The Action Plan could lay out concrete prioritised actions with specific targets and a limited number of indicators to be monitored, using an elaborated monitoring framework, and reviewed at the mid-term and end-of-term review of the Strategic Plan. This would help prioritize certain aspects of capacity-building and provide some focus for funding within a specific timeframe, and also allow for the elaboration of more detailed plans of action.
2. In light of the objectives and expected outcomes outlined in the new Strategic Plan, it would be useful if the 'Status of Capacity-Building Activities' reports prepared for consideration by the regular COP-MOP meetings also provided key results as a means to get a clearer sense of the progress achieved at all the different levels. In this regard, governments and relevant organizations would be requested to make submissions on both their activities and also on the results achieved. This could serve as a good measure of the outcomes for the capacity-building focal area of the Strategic Plan of the Protocol.
3. The operation of the Coordination Mechanism needs to be reviewed, especially with regard to the number, frequency and timing of the coordination meetings, as well as the objectives of the meetings and the selection of participants in order to improve participation and the outcomes of the meetings. More

importantly, effort should be made to encourage the participation of donors and to identify more sources of funding.

4. Emphasis should be put on regional capacity-building approaches. The Secretariat could play a key role in motivating regional stakeholders and engaging donors to undertake a greater role in building capacity for biosafety and helping them coordinate and facilitate regional activities. Through a regional approach countries would have a better sense of what is happening closer to home and benefit from the experiences of neighbouring countries. In addition, this would ensure that there is continued dialogue among stakeholders, as well as raise awareness regarding the Action Plan.
5. Possible measures to ensure the sustainability of capacity-building initiatives should be included in the Framework for Capacity-Building mentioned above to provide guidance to Parties in this regard. This would help them ensure that sustainability is taken into account in the design and implementation of their biosafety capacity-building initiatives, and contribute to long-term impacts.
6. In light of the changes in the needs of Parties, a consultative process for the new direction regarding capacity-building for biosafety is recommended. This would give an opportunity for Parties to set priorities that would fit with the new Strategic Plan. In addition, this would allow for Parties and the Secretariat to redefine the terminology in the Action Plan to reflect current practices and uses.
7. Given the varying needs of Parties, a provision of training modules could be helpful for Parties to take on certain capacity development activities on their own. This could offer alternatives for Parties that do not intend to actively pursue biotechnology and simply need guidance on how to integrate biosafety into existing systems. It could also provide an opportunity to involve non-Parties that would like to move forward with biosafety.





# 1 BACKGROUND

1. The **Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD), which came into force in December 1993, currently has 193 Parties. The objectives of the Convention are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding.<sup>1</sup>
2. The **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** (CPB) to the Convention on Biological Diversity seeks to *contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, taking into account the risks to human health, and specifically focussing on transboundary movements*. The Protocol establishes an Advance Informed Agreement (AIA) procedure for ensuring that countries are provided in advance with the information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the import of such organisms into their territory. The Protocol also establishes a Biosafety Clearing-House to facilitate the exchange of information on living modified organisms and to assist countries in the implementation of the Protocol. The Protocol entered into force on 11 September 2003 and to date it has 163 Parties.<sup>2</sup>
3. Article 22 of the Protocol requires Parties to cooperate in the development and/or strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities in biosafety, including biotechnology to the extent that it is required for biosafety, for the purpose of ensuring the effective implementation of the Protocol. In doing so, they are required to take fully into account the needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition for financial resources and access to and transfer of technology and know-how. In order to be able to implement their obligations, Parties need appropriate institutional mechanisms and infrastructure, well-trained human resources, adequate funding, access to relevant information and other types of capacities.<sup>3</sup>
4. An **Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol** (the object of this evaluation exercise) was adopted in February 2004 in Kuala Lumpur by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP) in its decision BS-1/5. It was subsequently updated by the COP-MOP at its third meeting in March 2006 (decision BS-III/3).<sup>4</sup> Its objective is to facilitate the development and strengthening of capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Protocol at the national, sub regional, regional and global levels. The Action Plan provides a general framework intended to catalyse, guide and leverage biosafety capacity-building efforts by Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations and to foster coordinated and focused global action towards the achievement of the above objective. It outlines key priority areas requiring urgent action and a series of key steps and activities to be undertaken.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CBD website ([www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int))

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> CBD website: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/text/article.shtml?a=cpb-22>

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/13/15 Annex III: Updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Biosafety Protocol

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

5. In its decision BS-III/3, the COP-MOP decided that a comprehensive review of the Action Plan would be conducted every five years, based on an independent evaluation of the effectiveness and outcomes of the capacity-building initiatives undertaken to support its implementation. At its fifth meeting held in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, the COP-MOP adopted terms of reference for the next comprehensive review to be conducted in 2011 and 2012 (decision BS-V/3). The outcomes of the review will be considered by the COP-MOP at its sixth meeting in October 2012 in India.
6. The purpose of the independent evaluation is threefold:
  - to assess the progress made with the implementation of the Action Plan for Biosafety, including the main achievements and shortcomings;
  - to review its relevance and effectiveness in guiding and facilitating capacity-building efforts; and
  - to make recommendations to improve its content and implementation, in line with the new Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (in which one of the five strategic objectives is to further develop and strengthen the capacity of Parties to implement the Protocol).

## 3 FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Framework

7. The evaluation looked at the progress made towards achieving the main objective of the updated Action Plan since its adoption in 2006. Given the nature of this evaluation, and the terms of reference, the evaluator established key evaluation questions (see Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix) that focused on three main criteria: relevance, effectiveness, and impact, and proposed the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Evaluation

ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVE			
RELEVANCE	EFFECTIVENESS		IMPACT
Current Relevance	Design	National, subregional, regional, international level	Catalysis
Strategic Plan Party Needs and Priorities	Guiding Principles Monitoring	Implementation Key Elements	Leveraging Guiding
	Coordination Mechanism	Processes and Steps	
Achievements	Lessons Learned		
	Recommendations		
	Strategic Plan	Revised Action Plan	

### **3.2 Methodology**

8. In the context of this evaluation, three main data collection methods were used, namely, documentation review, interviews, and an online survey.
9. The documents reviewed (listed in Annex 1), included COP-MOP documents, UNEP documents, GEF documents, academic literature as well as reports from other relevant organizations.
10. With regard to the interview, a letter was sent by the Secretariat on 17 November 2011 inviting various stakeholders to participate in an interview. The response has been satisfactory, with a total of 21 interviews. Over the course of the data collection phase, the consultant was able to interview a variety of stakeholder groups, namely multilateral organizations, networks, industry, academic and research, and the Secretariat. One of the challenges, however, has been inability to contact bilateral donor organisations. None responded to the invitation sent by the CBD and it has been difficult to find the contact persons within these organisations that work on biosafety. The data collected was assessed by reviewing the responses of each question, and outlining general trends in the responses. Interviews were undertaken in a semi-formal manner, as a means to gain in-depth insight on the evaluation questions.
11. A survey was launched on 14 November 2011 and all national focal points for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety were invited to access a questionnaire that was to be made available online for five weeks. The purpose of the survey was to gain insight at a national level on the evaluation questions, as well as gain insight on any achievements and/or challenges to capacity-building. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 305 emails, of which only 3 bounced, and only 1 person opted out of receiving further emails. The consultant sent the first reminder email on 29 November 2011 and a final reminder on 16 December 2011. In total, national focal points from 85 Parties responded to the survey out of the 163 Parties (see Annex 3). Of those, 55 partially answered the survey, whilst 30 fully completed the survey.

### **3.3 Limits of the Data Collection**

12. Overall the participation to the evaluation has been moderate and thus this should be taken into consideration when reading the conclusions. As a result, the use of the survey data is thus limited given that the response is not sufficient to represent views from a majority of the Parties. However, the conclusions in this evaluation report are based on the triangulation of the data and reflect the general aggregated data from the documentation review, the interviews, and the survey. It should be noted that the evaluation does not have a scientific mandate, thus the data collected is used to provide insight on the evaluation questions.

## 4 RESULTS

13. The evaluation has focused on three main criteria: relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the Action Plan. This section provides the results for each of these evaluation criteria. It is noted that the focus of the evaluation was not to review the results of the individual capacity-building initiatives but rather to assess the contribution of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities in general. Although the Action Plan covers many elements of capacity-building for biosafety, establishing a link between the progress achieved and the contribution of the Action Plan to that progress has been a challenge and a limitation to this evaluation. It is important to note that the conclusions reflect the results of the data collected.

### 4.1 Relevance

14. Within the context of this evaluation relevance refers to the extent to which the Action Plan is suited to the needs, priorities and policies of the target group of both recipients and donors. In this regard, the evaluation examined three main questions:

1. Is the Action Plan still relevant under the Cartagena Protocol?
2. In what way is the Action Plan still relevant in view of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol?
3. Does the Action Plan still respond to the needs and priorities identified by Parties and other Governments?

15. The purpose of the Action Plan was to provide a tool to assist Parties in building the necessary capacity to fulfill their obligations under the Protocol. Thus evaluating the relevance of the Action Plan is directly linked to its use and its need. The Updated Action Plan states its objective as follows:

*The objective of this Action Plan is to facilitate and support the development and strengthening of capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at the national, sub regional, regional and global levels in a timely manner. In this regard, the provision of financial, technical and technological support to developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, as well as countries with economies in transition, including countries amongst these that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity, is essential.*

*To achieve the above objective, this action plan aims to provide a general strategic framework to guide and facilitate the identification of country needs, priorities, actions and mechanisms of implementation and funding of capacity-building efforts at the national, regional and international levels.<sup>6</sup>*

16. The Updated Action Plan (referred to as Action Plan hence forth) was adopted by Parties at the time when capacity-building in biosafety was receiving favourable attention from donors. In such a context the Action Plan was indeed quite relevant. It provided broad guidance and identified key elements that required priority concrete action. Since the revised Action Plan was adopted in 2006, there has been some notable progress and a number of capacity-building activities have been reported.<sup>7</sup> Therefore in this current context, the needs and priorities of some parties have changed.<sup>8</sup> Some countries have progressed

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<sup>6</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/13/15 Annex III: Updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Biosafety Protocol

<sup>7</sup> See Status of Capacity-Building Activities reports and BCH

<sup>8</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/7/3

in developing their capacity for biosafety whilst others have had more limited achievements.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, other priorities have also emerged, thus lowering biosafety on the list of country and donor priorities.<sup>10</sup> As such, in this context the relevance of the Action Plan in its current format has decreased but still remains relevant.

17. According to the documents reviewed, the interviews, and the survey results, the Action Plan has, overall, been and still is a relevant tool for Parties. The Action Plan provides a comprehensive list of key elements that Parties need to address in order to move forward with developing their capacity for biosafety. It also provides guiding principles, an implementation approach, as well as a monitoring tool. All of these components have been coherent and responsive to COP-MOP decisions in regards to the Action Plan for capacity-building, and thus relevant to the Cartagena Protocol.
18. The Action Plan has not been particularly relevant for some of the donor agencies and implementing organizations, with the exception of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and its implementing agencies. Although the majority of the work or funding provided by these organizations is in line with the Action Plan, many interviewees have stated that the Action Plan was not used and was not really relevant for the planning and implementation of the biosafety initiatives they supported or undertook. Due to the highly technical nature of biosafety, organizations tend to focus and direct their funding based on their own priorities and technical expertise with regards to biosafety.<sup>11</sup>
19. One of the issues raised, has been the lack of awareness of the Action Plan. A number of interviewees have stated that they had never heard of the Action Plan. In terms of the relevance of the Action Plan, this has severe consequences, as the tool cannot be used if there is no awareness of its existence, thus making it irrelevant at the national levels. However, this can also be attributed to the broader issue of the high turnover rate of National Focal Points.
20. Many interviewees and survey respondents viewed the Action Plan as quite a broad and relevant document, which all major components for capacity-building for Biosafety. However some noted that it does not provide clear lines of action. As a result, the Action Plan seems to be more of a framework rather than a plan of action. Although its content is still relevant, as an action plan it lacks in specificity for Parties.
21. At its fifth meeting held in October 2010, the COP-MOP, in its decision BS-V/16, adopted a Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety covering the period 2011 to 2020. The Strategic Plan includes strategic and operational objectives for five focal areas. Focal Area 2 on Capacity-Building has a strategic objective to further develop and strengthen the capacity of Parties to implement the Protocol. The focal area also has seven operational objectives each with a set outcomes and indicators relating to the following areas/issues: (1) National Biosafety Frameworks; (2) Risk assessment and risk management; (3) Handling, transport, packaging, and identification; (4) Liability and redress; (5) Public awareness, education and participation; (6) Information Sharing; and (7) Biosafety education and training.<sup>12</sup>
22. The Strategic Plan provides a new more results-oriented strategic approach to capacity-building for biosafety. It is a relevant and useful tool for the Parties and Secretariat. However it does not undermine the relevance of the Action Plan, especially with regards to national, regional and sub-regional levels activities. It does however call for a revision of the Action Plan to provide for relevant tools to achieve the strategic and operational objectives outline in the Strategic Plan. Many interviewees and survey

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<sup>9</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>10</sup> These are the views of the interviewees and survey respondents, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>11</sup> Interviews, see Section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>12</sup> CBD website: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb\\_stplan\\_txt.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml)

respondents<sup>13</sup> also stated that the Action Plan is still relevant; however it would need some modifications, including changes that would be more inline with the Strategic Plan.

23. While the current Action Plan is comprehensive and contains valuable components, currently its level of responsiveness to the needs and priorities of Parties is linked to their level of progress in building capacity for biosafety. There seems to be three tiers of countries: (1) those that have decided to move ahead with biotechnology products and have developed the necessary capacity for biosafety; (2) those that feel as though their country would benefit from biotechnology, however still have limited capacity to undertake any biosafety measures outlined in the Action Plan; (3) those that have yet to decide if biotechnology will benefit their country. This has been also identified in the report of the Expert Review of the Effectiveness of Various Approaches to Biosafety Capacity-building, as well as the UNEP report on Lesson Learned on Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks.
24. Thus the relevance and responsiveness of the Action Plan varies for each Party. Parties that have decided to move ahead with biotechnology products and have gone beyond the initial stages have a better notion of their needs and capacities. Although the Action Plan may have provided those Parties with an initial springboard, it is no longer that relevant for them. These Parties now require more detailed actions outlined to fill any gaps in their capacity. It has been argued, that for these countries the easy part has been done and the challenging part lies ahead including: bringing drafts to adoption, making NBFs fully functional and putting in place complex capabilities in order to arrive at informed decisions on LMOs.<sup>14</sup>
25. The UNU-IAS study found that developing countries, including countries in Africa, Central Asia, Oceania, and the Caribbean, were unable to manage modern biotechnology and implement their NBFs (see Box 1). Thus those countries are unable to respond to their obligations under the CPB.<sup>15</sup> In these cases, the Action Plan is still a valuable tool. Survey respondents and some interviewees have also stated that Parties, who have greater capacity-building needs, find the Action Plan highly relevant and useful.<sup>16</sup>
26. In the revised version of the Action Plan in 2006, countries were requested to address some of the key factors limiting the implementation and effectiveness of the Action Plan. The second national report revealed that only 37 Parties (28 per cent) have developed a capacity-building strategy, while 96 Parties (72 per cent) have not done so.<sup>17</sup> Yet, 115 Parties (80 per cent) have stated that they still have capacity-building needs, 11 Parties (8 per cent) stated that they have a few more needs, while only 18 Parties (12 per cent) stated that they did not have any capacity-building needs, 14 of which are CBD WEOG Parties. In addition, Parties were requested to identify their needs. Some of the needs identified are: risk assessment and other scientific and technical expertise; risk management; and identification of LMOs, including their detection as demonstrated in Graph 1. In the survey, some Parties also expressed needs in other areas such as socio-economic considerations and liability and redress. This seems to suggest that Parties may still have a need to be guided by such a global tool as the Action Plan.

**Box 1:** There are no qualified personnel to handle issues on biosafety/LMOs in the country. Thus, strong initiative must be taken to build capacity on these areas. This in part, is limiting the country from appropriately utilizing GEF funds.

– Eritrea (Second National Report)

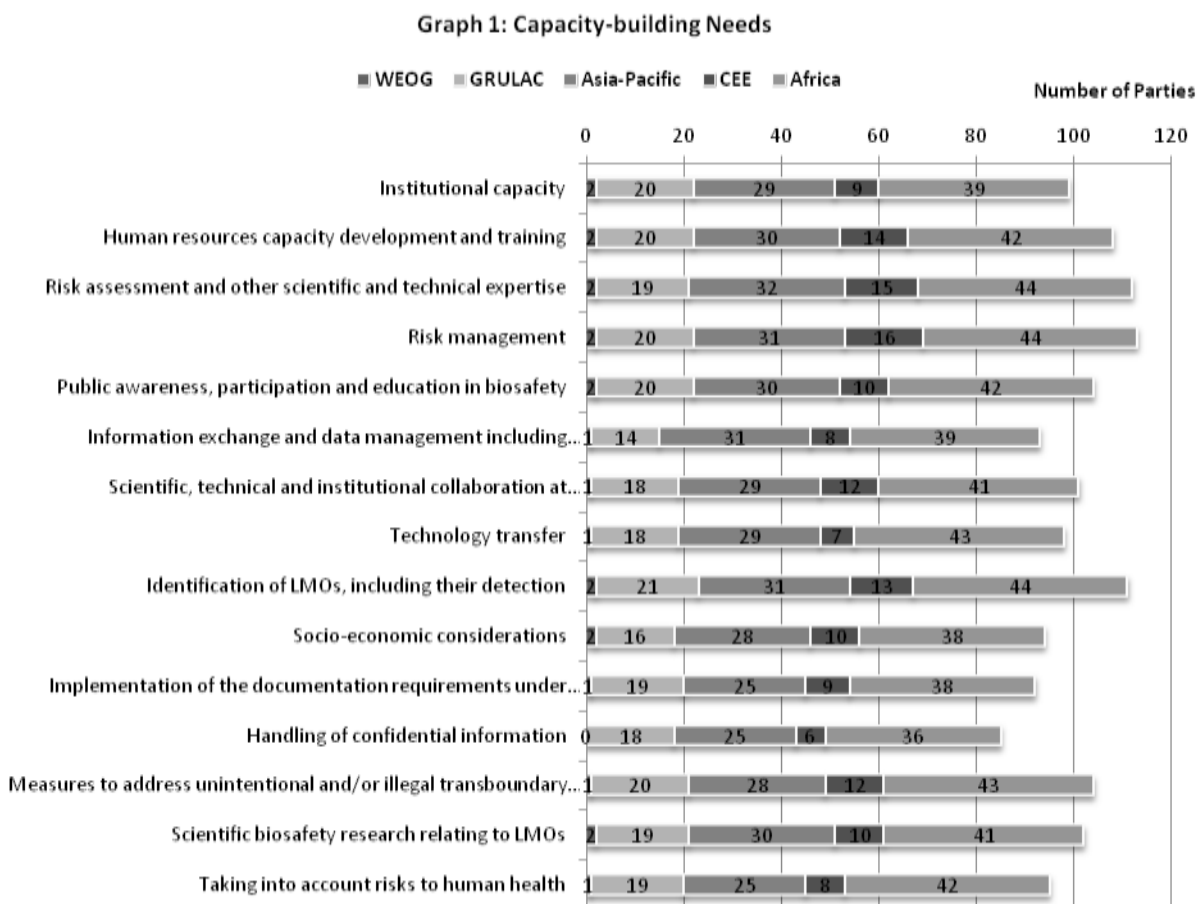
<sup>13</sup> Note that the views expressed are those of interviewees and respondents that have participated in the evaluation and do not necessarily reflect the majority of the Parties or stakeholders, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>14</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>15</sup> UNU-IAS (2008) International Funding Training in Biosafety and Biotechnology: Is it Bridging the Genetic Divide?

<sup>16</sup> See Section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>17</sup> Second National Report Results



Source: BCH National Reports Results

27. Overall, the current Action Plan is a relevant and useful tool for guiding the capacity-building efforts of Parties for the effective implementation of the Protocol. However, it needs to be updated to better respond to the changing needs of Parties and to be aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Protocol. There should be a greater link between the NBFs, the Action Plan, and the Strategic Plan.

## 4.2 Effectiveness

28. The evaluation reviewed effectiveness of the Action Plan based on the following definition: The extent to which the Action Plan has attained its objectives. The evaluation sought responses to the following questions:

1. How has the Action Plan supported the outcomes of the capacity-building initiatives implemented?
2. In what way has the Action Plan been effective in guiding capacity-building activities at the national, regional, and international level?
3. Was the design of the Action Plan effective to attain its objective?
4. What has been the overall progress made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan?

### 4.2.1 Outcomes Supported by the Action Plan

29. The Action Plan has been effective to varying degrees in terms of its support for the outcomes of capacity-building initiatives. There have been a number of initiatives such as trainings, the development of



legislative frameworks, increasing research and technical capacity. However, whether or not the Action Plan contributed to the outcomes of those initiatives can only really be assessed on a case-by-case basis. As previously mentioned establishing a direct link between the Action Plan and capacity-building initiatives has been limited.

30. There has been an impressive range of projects and activities carried out by a number of national, regional and international partners. A number of donor agencies, the GEF and the UN agencies have responded to the requests for capacity-building support for biosafety by the Parties.<sup>18</sup>

31. The GEF has granted over 100 million USD for biosafety capacity-building projects, which have received over 95 million USD in cofinancing from other donors and governments.<sup>19</sup> The main initial support provided for the Parties has been the development and implementation of the National Biosafety Frameworks (NBFs) mostly through the UNEP-GEF projects. The NBFs aimed to provide countries with a framework for implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at the national level (see Box 2). As of December 2011, 117 countries have developed their draft NBFs, while 74 countries are yet to develop theirs.<sup>20</sup> Eight countries participated in the demonstration projects for the implementation of the NBFs, and there are currently 52 other countries that have received funding from the GEF for the implementation of their draft NBFs.<sup>21</sup>

**Box 2:** The Project has developed a draft Law "On Safety in Genetic Engineering Activities", and is currently pending before the supreme legislative body of the Republic.

– Azerbaijan (Second National Report)

**Box 3:** Moldova has approved the National Biosafety Action Plan as political document for the period 2009-2015, which involves many different actors and aimed to strengthen capacity-building in the field of biosafety.

– Moldova (Second National Report)

32. In the case of GEF-funded activities, the Action Plan has indeed supported the continued efforts of the Parties in the implementation of the NBFs (see Box 3). The key elements of the Action Plan are still valid and the language used is still useful for continued support between countries and the financial mechanism.<sup>22</sup> Some of the weaknesses in implementing the NBFs have been the broad scope of the projects, the lack of strategic focus, as well as the limited resources. As such many countries have not been able to implement or operationalize their NBFs.<sup>23</sup> There is a lack of capacity for some countries to undertake stocktaking of the current needs and to prioritise them in order to move forward.<sup>24</sup> As countries move forward in their biosafety initiatives, there will be a need for greater linkages between the National Biosafety Frameworks, the Action Plan, and the Strategic Plan.<sup>25</sup>

33. Some of the initiatives supported by bilateral donors, organizations or foundations have been inline the Action Plan. However, more than half of the interviewees from organizations have stated that the Action Plan was not directly used in the design and implementation of their activities. Therefore, although some

<sup>18</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9: Expert Review on the Effectiveness of Various Approaches to Biosafety Capacity-Building: Identifying Best Practices and Lessons Learned

<sup>19</sup> GEF Database: <http://www.gefonline.org/projectListSQL.cfm>

<sup>20</sup> Interview with the GEF

<sup>21</sup> GEF Database: <http://www.gefonline.org/projectListSQL.cfm>

<sup>22</sup> These are the views of the majority of Interviewees, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>23</sup> UNEP-GEF (2008) Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects

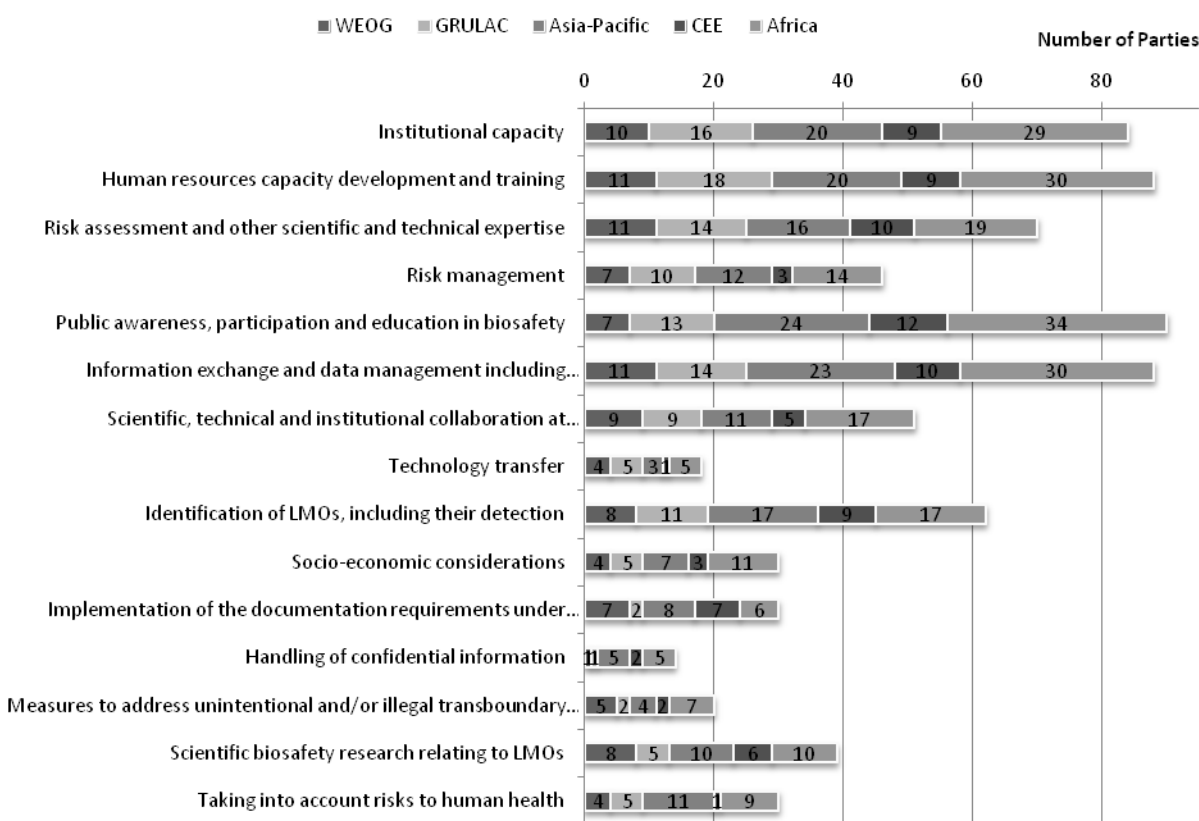
<sup>24</sup> Obonyo et al. (2011) Identified Gaps in Biosafety Knowledge and Expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa, AgBioForum, Vol 14, Number 2

<sup>25</sup> Interviews, see section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

activities of donors and organizations were inline with the Action Plan, they were not directly influenced or linked to it.<sup>26</sup> The Action Plan has thus not really been used by bilateral donors and organisations. As discussed earlier, this is perhaps due to the technical nature of capacity-building for biosafety, as well as the expertise within these organisations. Because the Action Plan is a comprehensive global framework, it does seem to cover activities undertaken by bilateral organizations (this issue is further discussed in section 4.2.2).

34. Although the Action Plan may not have directly supported some of the activities and initiatives, there is clearly continued effort by countries to undertake capacity-building for biosafety under the various elements of the Action Plan. Within the last reporting period 120 Parties (83 per cent) have stated that have undertaken activities, whilst only 24 Parties (17 per cent) stated they have not.<sup>27</sup> Graph 2 shows the results from the second national report regarding areas in which Parties have undertaken capacity-building activities.

**Graph 2: Areas of Activity Undertaken by Parties**



Source: Second National Reports

35. In their second national reports, a large number of Parties reported to have undertaken activities in support of following elements of the Action Plan: institutional capacity (84 Parties); human resources capacity and training (88); public awareness, participation and education in biosafety (90); information exchange and data management (88); risk assessment (70); and identification of LMOs including their detection (62 Parties).

<sup>26</sup> See section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>27</sup> Second National Report Results

36. With regard, to institutional capacity, there has been a clear progress in the establishment of laws, regulations and guidelines. There are more than 700 records on laws and regulations registered in the BCH. This number has increased from 2 records in 2004, to 57 records in 2005, to 217 in 2009, to 726 in 2011.<sup>28</sup> In their second national reports, 52 Parties out of the 143 Parties that submitted reports (36%) indicated that they have a domestic regulatory framework fully in place and 56 Parties (39%) reported that it is partially in place. Progress has also been made towards the establishment of administrative frameworks. Institutional capacity-building has been one of the main components of the UNEP-GEF projects, which have produced some concrete results. Although, there are still needs for improving institutional capacity for biosafety, it is no longer a pressing priority as it was when the Protocol was adopted.<sup>29</sup>
37. With regard to human resource development, many training activities and workshops have been implemented as reflected in the BCH records. The Action Plan has guided these efforts even though it is not possible to establish its direct role in the planning and delivery of these training activities and workshops (see Box 4). Progress in the development of human resources capacities is also demonstrated by the responses in the second national report, where 143 out 161 Parties submitted reports by 31 December 2011.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, there is still a need for capacity-building<sup>31</sup> and funding in the area human resources as only 62 per cent of Parties (89 Parties) have stated receiving external support or benefits from collaborative activities with other Parties in the development and/or strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities in biosafety.<sup>32</sup>
38. Many capacity-building initiatives have included a component on public awareness, education and participation. It is also one of the components of all the NBFs developed under the UNEP-GEF project.<sup>33</sup> In order to advance efforts in public awareness, education, and participation, there needs to be a focus on those who use the LMOs, including provision of training for stakeholders that use, handle and transport the LMOs.<sup>34</sup>
39. With regard to data management and the exchange of information, the Biosafety Clearing House has been an effective tool for information exchange, especially in the last three to four years. The BCH has had an increased rate of access of 15 per cent over the previous years, from 75 000 visits in 2009-2010 to 88 000 visits from 2010-2011.<sup>35</sup> The majority of interviewees have stated that the BCH is indeed the 'go-to' website for biosafety information, and the most significant contribution of the Secretariat towards capacity-building for biosafety. However, it still has some challenges. The main challenge has been to ensure that Parties submit and update their information. The UNEP-GEF undertook BCH projects to

**Box 4:** Under the INBF activities, the National Biotechnology Strategy and Action Plan are developed which includes human resource development and infrastructure improvement.  
– Laos (Second National Report)

<sup>28</sup> BCH: <http://bch.cbd.int/database/laws>

<sup>29</sup> UNEP-GEF (2008) Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects

<sup>30</sup> Second National Report results

<sup>31</sup> UNEP/CBD/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>32</sup> Second National Report results

<sup>33</sup> UNEP-GEF (2008) Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects

<sup>34</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4, and Interviews, see section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>35</sup> Data provided by CBD Secretariat

build capacities of countries to effectively participate in the BCH. However, the information on LMOs is not always updated. The number of national BCH nodes is also still rather low.<sup>36</sup>

40. Risk assessment is one of the key elements in the Action Plan, which has also seen some notable progress. However, given the magnitude of the task, there is still some work to be undertaken for capacity-building for risk assessment. The COP-MOP at its forth meeting in its decision BS IV/11 established the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment (AHTEG). The AHTEG has drafted a Roadmap on Risk Assessment. At its fifth meeting the COP-MOP welcomed the *Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs*.<sup>37</sup> The AHTEG is currently working on guidance for post-release monitoring and long-term effects of LMOs, as well as risk assessment of living modified trees.<sup>38</sup> In their second national reports, 63 Parties (45% of the respondents) reported that they have acquired the necessary domestic capacity to conduct risk assessment and 56 Parties (39%) reported that they have established a mechanism for training national experts to conduct risk assessments. In addition, 95 Parties (67%) reported that they have established a mechanism for conducting risk assessments prior to taking decisions regarding LMOs, and 70 Parties (50%) have established guidelines for doing so (see Box 5).
41. A number of other activities have focussed on scientific and technical capacity-building, which have resulted in notable outcomes, for example in the area of LMO detection. These initiatives have been largely supported by international organizations and research institutions such as GenØk - Centre for Biosafety in Norway.<sup>39</sup> A number of interviewees argued that a sound scientific knowledge and background is an essential base to capacity-building for biosafety.<sup>40</sup> However, most organizations also stated that the Action Plan did not play a direct role in planning their initiatives, but that at a country level the Action Plan did provide guidance, especially in the case of the African Union project.<sup>41</sup>

**Box 5:** In the proposed INBF project provisions have been made for the capacity-building at institutional as well as individual levels on various aspects of biosafety. It has also been proposed to develop the capacities of different laboratories for the detection of GMOs and GMO FFPs.

- Bangladesh (Second National Report)

42. In general, progress has been made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan. In particular, a large number of Parties have undertaken activities in support of the following elements of the Action Plan: institutional capacity; human resources capacity and training; public awareness, participation and education in biosafety; information exchange and data management; risk assessment; and identification of LMOs including their detection. However, very few activities have been undertaken in support of the following elements: handling of confidential information, technology transfer, implementation of documentation requirements and socio-economic considerations.

#### 4.2.2 Guidance of the Capacity-Building Efforts at National, Regional, Subregional and International Levels

43. The Action Plan was meant to be a guiding tool at the national, regional, sub-regional and international levels to increase capacity for biosafety. As a guidance tool, the Action Plan included an implementation section, which provides an indicative list of generic activities that may be implemented, as appropriate, by governments and relevant organisations at national, subregional, regional and international levels. The

<sup>36</sup> BCH website

<sup>37</sup> See: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/decisions/decision.shtml?decisionID=12325>

<sup>38</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/AHTEG-RA&RM/3/4

<sup>39</sup> Reports on the Status of Capacity-Building Activities

<sup>40</sup> See Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>41</sup> Interviews, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

Action Plan has been effective to varying degrees in guiding capacity-building activities at the national, regional, and international level.

44. At the international level, there have been a number of initiatives, most notably the UNEP-GEF, National Biosafety Frameworks and the establishment of the Biosafety Clearing House, for which the Action Plan has indeed provided guidance. In addition, there have been a number of trainings activities undertaken by the FAO, as well as the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), and the Norwegian Center for Biosafety. There has also been IUCN's Environmental Law Programme and the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) aimed at strengthening national capacities to implement and enforce environmental laws and requirements of multilateral environmental agreements<sup>42</sup>, and the Biosafety Information Network and Advisory Service (BINAS), which provides of information and technical assistance on biotechnology and risk management. There have also been some industry lead international activities such as the Global Industry Coalition Website Initiative, and the creation of Biotechnology Fellowship Programme and Biosafety Programme.<sup>43</sup> However, whether or not the Action Plan has guided these initiatives, could not be established.
45. Within the context of the Action Plan, a Coordination Mechanism was established to *facilitate the exchange of information with a view to promoting partnerships and maximizing complementarities and synergies between various capacity-building initiatives undertaken*. The Coordination Mechanism comprises five elements: (1) Liaison group; (2) Biosafety capacity-building databases; (3) Information sharing and network mechanism; (4) Coordination meetings and workshops; and (5) Reporting mechanism.
46. The Liaison Group, which was established to provide advice to the CBD Executive Secretary, has enabled international experts to share with the Executive Secretary their ideas and insights on the overall strategic approaches, as well as conceptual and possible practical operational measures for enhancing the implementation and coordination of capacity-building initiatives. Overall, the Liaison Group has been useful and effective in its mandate. It has provided the Executive Secretary sound advice and has reviewed key issues diligently.
47. One of the main contributors to capacity-building and the Coordination Mechanism has been the BCH with respect to information exchange. The purpose of the BCH is to *facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with, living modified organisms; and assist Parties to implement the Protocol, taking into account the special needs of developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition as well as countries that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity*.<sup>44</sup> The BCH has become the 'go-to' source for biosafety for the majority of stakeholders and Parties. It provides key information on what has been accomplished, including biosafety capacity-building projects and training courses undertaken. However, its main weakness is its dependence on Parties to upload and update their information. As a result, in some areas like LMO approval, the BCH lacks currency, especially in comparison with industry run databases.
48. The databases on capacity-building in the BCH have also contributed to the promotion of coordination and awareness of on-going initiatives and facilitated the sharing of good practices and lessons learned. In total, the BCH has over 400 records on capacity-building for biosafety providing a wide range of information, for example: projects, biosafety-related courses, available strategies and frameworks, workshop reports and other resources. In addition, a number of interviewees have stated that the online

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<sup>42</sup> UNEP/CDB/CM-CB/7/3

<sup>43</sup> UNU-IAS (2008) Internationally Funded Training in Biosafety and Biotechnology: Is it Bridging the Genetic Divide?

<sup>44</sup> BCH website

conferences provided through the BCH have provided a useful tool for the exchange of views and information among Parties.

49. One of the key issues has been the high turnover rate of the national BCH focal points. One interview revealed that the turnover rate for trained BCH focal points is 100 per cent every three years. Thus there is a need for continued training and consequently funding for such training to ensure that the BCH remains operational at the national level. Unfortunately, the GEF can only provide funding for training once for each country. There is currently a proposal to expand the UNEP-GEF BCH II capacity-building project to cover all eligible countries.<sup>45</sup> The Secretariat has provided online tutorials on the BCH, which Parties could use, for continuous training at the national level. Another challenge is the need for translation of documents into one of the six UN languages before they are uploaded in the BCH, which can be costly and time-consuming. These challenges have had an affect on the overall effectiveness of the BCH as the primary source of information required under the Protocol, especially with regards to new legislation and approvals of LMOs by Parties.
50. The coordination meetings, the forth component of the Coordination Mechanism, have provided a useful forum to build relations among key stakeholders, raise awareness about existing projects, share experiences and discuss new ideas, which has indeed contributed to the objective set out for the Coordination Mechanism. At the height of capacity-building initiatives in mid 2000, a number of Parties and organizations attended the coordination meetings. However, in more recent years, the level of participation has changed,<sup>46</sup> as a result of changing priorities and funding for biosafety. Although, this does not change the value of these meetings<sup>47</sup>, the majority of the interviewees<sup>48</sup> stated that it does impact the level of effectiveness of the Coordination Mechanism. Especially given that there is little evidence of actual coordination among stakeholders, for example, through joint work plans or strategy development<sup>49</sup>, however efforts have been made to promote better cooperation with the presentation of the *Draft Guiding Framework for Promoting Synergies and Complementarity between Biosafety Capacity-Building at the Country Level*.<sup>50</sup> As such, it may be useful to review the purpose of the coordination meetings, as well as their timeliness and frequency, their agendas and outcomes, as well as the selection of participants.<sup>51</sup>
51. Another tool that was established is the Roster of Biosafety Experts which is mandated to *provide advice and other support, as appropriate and upon request, to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, to conduct risk assessment, make informed decisions, develop national human resources and promote institutional strengthening, associated with the transboundary movements of living modified organisms*.<sup>52</sup> In 2008, the roster was revamped in line with COP-MOP decision BS-IV/4 and as of 31 December 2011, it contained 129 experts nominated by a total of 35 Parties and other Governments. Although some progress has been made with the establishment of the roster of experts, it has nonetheless remained largely underutilized over the last two years as a result of the lack of necessary funding. The roster of experts remains a useful tool to provide scientific and technical advice, however, the results from the second national report show that only 42 Parties (30 per cent) have submitted details to the roster of experts.
52. A Voluntary Fund for the Roster of Experts was established, on a pilot-phase basis, by the Conference of the Parties in decision VI/29, paragraph 27, and was supposed to last for four years until 2008. At its

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<sup>45</sup> Found at: <http://unep.org/delc/BCHII.asp>

<sup>46</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>47</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/3

<sup>48</sup> In this case, all but two interviewees, See section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>49</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>50</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/4 Annex II

<sup>51</sup> Interviews, see section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>52</sup> CBD website: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_actionplan.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_actionplan.shtml)

fourth meeting held in 2008, the COP-MOP agreed to revitalize the pilot phase of the Voluntary Fund and invited developed country Parties and other donors to make contributions to it.<sup>53</sup> In response, the Government of Spain and the European Commission made contributions to Voluntary Fund, which were used to support two Parties to hire experts from the roster. The Secretariat received requests from two other Parties for assistance from the fund but the money available was insufficient to cover those requests. The Executive Secretary sent letters to developed country Parties soliciting additional contributions for the voluntary fund. However, no further positive response has been received.<sup>54</sup>

53. In terms of reporting within the context of Section 6 of the Action Plan, the Secretariat has provided reports on the status of capacity-building activities at all of the COP-MOP meetings. However, although the information in the reports is useful to provide an overview of what has been done, it does not provide the results or outcomes of these activities; it simply presents an outline of capacity-building activities undertaken by Parties and relevant organizations. In light of the objectives and outcomes set out in the new Strategic Plan, these reports would be more valuable if they extracted key results to really show progress at the different levels. In this regard, the Secretariat could request submissions not only on activities but also on results.

**Box 6:** Vietnam is co-operating with countries in ASEAN, like Cambodia and Laos, to establish a regional project of risk assessment for GMOs.

- *Vietnam (Second National Report*

54. At the regional and sub-regional levels there has been some notable progress (see Box 6). There have been a number of regional activities that have been funded by multilateral and bilateral institutions, such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) through its BIO-NET project in Asia, as well as its training programs in CEE countries.<sup>55</sup> In Eastern Africa the BIO-EARN project funded by SIDA has successfully trained PhD and Masters

students in biosafety and also contributed to establishing biosafety regulatory frameworks.<sup>56</sup> SIDA will continue its funding with a new regional programme name Bio-Innovate of Eastern Africa, investing approximately 10.7 million.<sup>57</sup> In Latin America, the World Bank's project on Multi-Country Capacity-Building for Compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety has also shown progress in providing tools for risk assessment. As well as regional projects funded by the World Bank and the GEF in West Africa and Latin America aimed at building capacity for regulatory frameworks and risk assessment, Biosafe Train supported by DANIDA in Africa to build capacity for impact assessment of transgenic plants, and the UNEP CARICOM regional project to implement the NBFs in the Caribbean. There has also been an increase in South-South cooperation for capacity-building in biosafety.<sup>58 59</sup>

55. Whether, the Action Plan has been used in the context of planning and implementing regional initiatives can only be determined on a case by case basis. The African Union has however made some progress in this regard with support for the GTZ. It has created a position for a biosafety expert to help its member countries undertake biosafety activities. In this regard, the Action Plan has been extensively used to create an action plan as well as a strategic plan for biosafety within the organization.<sup>60</sup> However, there is an increasing need for capacity-building at the regional level<sup>61</sup> "because of shared environmental, human

<sup>53</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4/Add.2

<sup>54</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/4/ADD1

<sup>55</sup> See: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1033e/i1033e00.htm>; <http://it.doa.go.th/asianbionet/about.htm>

<sup>56</sup> Found at: [http://www.iucea.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=94&Itemid=111](http://www.iucea.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=94&Itemid=111)

<sup>57</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>58</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/8

<sup>59</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/7

<sup>60</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/INF/4

<sup>61</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/8



health, animal health, socio-economic, as well as political realities”.<sup>62</sup> Consequently, the need for guidance to promote better coordination and synergies among donors to support such initiatives.<sup>63</sup> In this respect the Coordination Mechanism has presented the *Draft Guidance for Promoting Regional and Sub-regional Initiatives and Approaches to Capacity-building in Biosafety*.<sup>64</sup>

56. The CBD Secretariat has also been conducting training workshops at regional and subregional levels. These training activities have been highly appreciated by Parties, as the Secretariat is viewed as a neutral stakeholder on the issue of biosafety. These training activities have covered Parties that may have been overlooked by other donors for various reasons. Some of the key activities undertaken by the Secretariat include: the training on the Biosafety Clearing-House, including a Train the Trainers course for IT and CPB Regional Advisors in all of the regions. The Secretariat has also undertaken training activities on documentation and identification of LMOs through its partnership with the Green Customs Initiative to train the trainers in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and GRULAC regions. As well it has conducted workshops on capacity-building and exchange of experiences on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs for all the regions. It also entered into a Memorandum of Cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to strengthen capacities and promote information sharing among developing countries.<sup>65</sup>
57. At the national level, the main activities have been the implementation of the NBF. As previously stated, there are currently 52 countries that have received GEF funding to move forward with their NBF.<sup>66</sup> The FAO has also undertaken national level projects in a number of countries on such issues as regulatory frameworks.<sup>67</sup> Establishing the level of guidance provided by the Action Plan within these projects is challenging. In the implementation of the NBFs, the GEF does use the Action Plan as a guidance tool; however in the context of other donor activities, as previously stated, there is no evidence of a direct link between the Action Plan and the planning and implementation of the activities.
58. Overall, the Action Plan has been moderately successful in guiding Parties. The Action Plan does provide valuable guidance for Parties at the early stages of building their capacity; however, for Parties that have progressed in their biosafety capacity, the Action Plan does not provide the necessary details to move forward. These Parties are now able to establish specific needs tailored to their own priorities and as such the Action Plan is too broad for their current needs.<sup>68</sup>
59. Some of the countries used the Action Plan to initiate capacity-building in their countries, stating that as a result of the Action Plan they now undertake capacity-building activities in their countries in line with the Action Plan. Some Parties felt the Action Plan provided them a good list of potential initiatives and the sequence of actions that can be undertaken, but there seems to be a need for prioritisation. Others said it provided guidance for training activities at the national levels.<sup>69</sup> Depending on their needs, some of the Parties do not always need to undertake capacity-building activities that are only related to biosafety, but integrate biosafety in existing systems.<sup>70</sup> Two of the key factors that have been identified which limit the

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<sup>62</sup> FAO (2008) Building Biosafety Capacities: FAO's Experience and Outlook

<sup>63</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>64</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/CM-CB/5/4

<sup>65</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>66</sup> GEF Database: <http://www.gefonline.org/projectListSQL.cfm>

<sup>67</sup> FAO (2008) Building Biosafety Capacities: FAO's Experience and Outlook

<sup>68</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9, and Interviews: this has been the view of a majority of interviewees and survey respondents, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>69</sup> These views are from the survey respondents and do not reflect the view of all Parties, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>70</sup> Interviews, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection



use of the Action Plan as a guidance document, have been the lack of awareness of the Action Plan by some Parties and stakeholders,<sup>71</sup> and the decrease in funding for biosafety, which will be further discussed in section 4.2.4.<sup>72</sup>

#### 4.2.3 *Design of the Action Plan*

60. The Action Plan includes seven sections: (1) Objective of the Action Plan; (2) Guiding Principles and Approaches; (3) Key Elements Requiring Concrete Action; (4) Processes and Steps; (5) Implementation; (6) Monitoring and Evaluation; (7) Review of the Action Plan. These components are meant to guide countries in undertaking capacity-building initiatives. The Action Plan provides a comprehensive framework that Parties can use to initiate capacity-building activities. The majority of interviewees and the survey respondents have stated that the design of the Action Plan is generally useful and that Parties have a basis upon which to determine what can be undertaken and how.
61. The guiding principles are useful for developing countries, and do provide a framework within which to undertake capacity-building activities. Most interviewees and survey respondents have indeed felt that this component of the Action Plan is quite useful. No issues have been raised regarding these guiding principles and approaches.
62. With regards to the key elements, most interviewees agree that they are inclusive and comprehensive in most parts and not much needs to be changed or added. The addition of new key elements to the version that adopted by COP-MOP in 2006, namely, socio-economic considerations, documentation requirements, and confidential information, signals that the Action Plan has been responding to the needs of the Parties. A review of the key elements where they could be sorted between administrative and technical may provide more clarity.<sup>73</sup> Also, the following additions have been proposed by survey respondents:
  - Research related to post-release and the long term effects on the receiving environment as well as development of identification and detection techniques for LMOs and LMOs-FFP (key element n).
  - Collaboration at regional and international levels to be strengthened
  - Risk assessment and risk management specific to centres of origin and genetic diversification
  - Indigenous and local communities (ILC) in relation to Article 4 and under Article 26.1
  - Key element (b) to include all scales “Human resource development and training at regional, subregional and international level”
  - Liability and redress in line with the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress
63. Concerning the processes and steps, this section is quite vague and out-dated. Although the processes listed are valid, in order for the Action Plan to become useful for countries, more detail would need to be provided for each key processes, especially with regards to the availability of funding.
64. The Action Plan also established a monitoring and coordination section, which is well developed but underutilized. At its first meeting in 2004 the COP-MOP adopted an initial set of indicators to be used by Parties to monitor the progress of their capacity-building activities implemented in accordance with the Action Plan. In 2008, the COP-MOP at its fourth meeting adopted a revised set of indicators, which also covered the additional key elements to the updated Action Plan. Although the indicators are generally good and useful for assessing the progress of the Action Plan, there has been little evidence in the

<sup>71</sup> Interviews and Survey, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

<sup>72</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>73</sup> Interviews, see section 3.3 on the limits of the data collection

documentation reviewed that these indicators have been used. In 2007, the Executive Secretary received only two responses<sup>74</sup> to the request to Parties to provide their experiences in using the preliminary set of indicators. The two responses stated that the indicators had not been used.<sup>75</sup> However, some organizations and countries have stated that they have used the indicators.<sup>76</sup>

65. The limited use of the above-mentioned indicators could be partly because of two main weaknesses: first, the data collection methods have not been properly defined with regard to how and where the information will be collected and by whom. It is also unclear what role the Secretariat plays in the monitoring process and the responsibilities of Parties are not well defined in the Action Plan. Secondly, there are no clear targets and no baselines against which to measure progress, which are key components of a monitoring framework.
66. There is a need for a more detailed monitoring framework with indicators linked to the indicators specified under the relevant strategic objectives of the current Strategic Plan for the Protocol.<sup>77</sup> The current set of indicators is still valid and can be used as a reference tool for countries that wish to elaborate their own monitoring framework at the national or project level. A few organizations, such as the GEF, have used similar capacity-building indicators to monitor their projects, and some Parties, such as Costa Rica and the Republic of Benin, have incorporated indicators in their NBFs.<sup>78</sup> Monitoring progress of capacity-building has an important link with monitoring the implementation of national biosafety frameworks. The Secretariat could revise the indicators to reflect the data available through a variety of means such as the GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity-building, or the UNEP Biosafety programme, and build a monitoring framework with indicators linked to the NBFs and the Strategic Plan.
67. Overall, the components of Action Plan are still valid and useful but would need to be redesigned and updated to help Parties better prioritise and address their needs. Comments regarding the design of the Action Plan have centred on two main issues; first, the broadness of the document, and second, that as it is currently presented, it is viewed more as a guidance tool or framework, rather than an Action Plan. The components are viewed as a list of actions that may or may not be possible for countries to undertake. It also does not allow for regional-level prioritisation of needs. Although, the Action Plan does not state that all countries have to undertake all of the activities listed, it does not offer alternatives for Parties to tailor relevant components to their respective needs or capacities. For example, it does not offer alternatives for Parties that do not intend to actively pursue the development or use of biotechnology products and simply need guidance on how to integrate biosafety into existing systems.
68. An action plan generally calls for actions to be taken by identified stakeholders; sometimes within specific timeframes, and in most cases these actions need funding which is currently a major challenge. The Action Plan, as it is currently designed, lacks some of these components. The design of the Capacity-building Framework under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is quite similar to the current Action Plan. However it is presented as a Framework, thus the interpretation by Parties is quite different.<sup>79</sup> A Framework provides a tool and an approach or guidance, which may not necessarily require provision of funding.

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<sup>74</sup> Cambodia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

<sup>75</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4 /Add.1

<sup>76</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4/Add.1, and Survey, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>77</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/3

<sup>78</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4 /Add.1

<sup>79</sup> Found at: [http://unfccc.int/cooperation\\_and\\_support/capacity\\_building/items/1033.php#Capacity-building%20frameworks](http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/capacity_building/items/1033.php#Capacity-building%20frameworks)

69. Finally, one of the main omissions in the current design of the Action Plan is the lack of measures for ensuring the sustainability and long-term viability of capacity-building initiatives and activities. The Action Plan could provide guidance to Parties on how to ensure that their capacity-building activities incorporate sustainability strategies to help ensure long-lasting impacts.<sup>80</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Overall Progress of the Action Plan

70. Overall, good progress has been made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan, i.e. to facilitate and support the development and strengthening of capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of the Protocol. There have been a large number of initiatives at the national, regional, and international level, with the funding a wide variety of stakeholders. In addition, the databases have provided a wealth of information to support Parties in their initiatives. The Action Plan as a guiding framework has indeed contributed to the progress made with regard to capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Protocol, particularly in the case of the NBFs, which have been used as a stepping stone at the national level.
71. However, there are still a number of countries that have not moved beyond developing their draft NBFs and still need capacity-building support, as reported in the second national reports.<sup>81</sup> This can be attributed to various factors, including lack of funding, lack of human resources, high staff turnover rates and other competing priorities. Many Parties have stated that they still need capacity-building support including funding and technical assistance. In this regard some Parties have requested for more guidance and training on risk assessment<sup>82</sup>. Other have requested for training as provided by the Secretariat. Survey respondents have also stated that there are challenges in terms of finding champions for biosafety, which could improve national ownership and leadership.
72. Overall, the Secretariat has provided valuable support to the Parties. The majority of interviewees and survey respondents commented that the work undertaken by the Secretariat has been commendable and has provided a good contribution to biosafety, especially with regards to the BCH and its regional activities and workshops in support of capacity-building for biosafety.<sup>83</sup> There are some areas where the Secretariat could improve in its support, namely, raising awareness of the Action Plan, as well as providing more guidance for available funds and the process of accessing the funds. Due to the highly technical nature of biosafety and the needs that are country or region-specific, the Secretariat could fill the gap through regional capacity-building activities. However, the Secretariat is currently limited by human and financial resources to undertake such activities. Most of the funding for Secretariat's capacity-building activities has been provided on voluntary basis by donor countries and organizations and in an unpredictable manner, which has, in some cases, tended to compromise the sustainability of the training provided.
73. Given the expressed need for more capacity-building assistance, there is clearly a role for the Secretariat to provide capacity-building support to Parties. The Secretariat could also create a platform for countries that have gained expertise to assist countries that have greater capacity needs. If the Secretariat were to continue providing such support, more reliable and predictable sources of funding and additional human resources would be required. As well, a more strategic focus that is coherent and complementary to other initiatives, and consistent with the Strategic Plan, would be required.

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<sup>80</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/3

<sup>81</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>82</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/4

<sup>83</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

74. The Action Plan as a guiding framework has indeed contributed to some of the progress made with regard to capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Protocol. According to the survey, the key elements for which there has been the most improvement has have been with respect to institutional capacity-building, human resources development and training; public awareness, participation and education in biosafety; information exchange and data management, as well as risk assessment. The key elements that still need attention are the handling of confidential information and implementation of the documentation requirements under Article 18.2 of the Protocol. The survey results have also shown that there are challenges in terms of finding champions for biosafety, which could improve national ownership and leadership.
75. Although, as noted presented in earlier sections, there have been various sources of funding from multilateral and bilateral organisations in the past, one of the notable issues has been the decrease in the availability of funding for biosafety capacity-building. When the Protocol was adopted in 2000 there was good momentum for funding biosafety capacity-building initiatives by a variety of donors. However, of late, the priorities of many bilateral donors have changed to other issues and the amount of funding available for funding for biosafety activities has declined. In response, the coordination meetings have drafted a few tools to assist Parties to deal with the changing funding trends and scenarios. These include: an *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, as well as *Draft Guidance on Promoting Regional and Subregional Initiatives and Approaches to Capacity-building in Biosafety* which was developed at the third coordination meeting.<sup>84</sup> The outcomes of these tools still remain to be determined.
76. When the Protocol was adopted in 2000 there were a number of donors providing financing for capacity-building initiatives. More recently, the priorities of many donors have changed, and consequently the amount of available funding for biosafety activities has declined. Funding is currently a major concern for most countries (see Box 7).<sup>85</sup> As reflected in the updated Action Plan, it includes a specific process calling for enhancement of the effectiveness and adequacy of financial resources provided by multilateral and bilateral donors and other donors to developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition.<sup>86</sup> According to the second national reports, 41 countries have provided support to other countries for capacity-building. Of these, 21 countries used bilateral channels, 9 countries used regional channels, and 11 countries used multilateral channels. Of the 88 Parties that have reported receiving external support or benefited from collaborative activities with other Parties, 37% of the responses refer to bilateral channels, 23% to regional channels, and 40% to multilateral channels.<sup>87</sup>
- Box 7:** Economic difficulties and budgetary constraints have limited the management of biosafety and the development of institutional capacity for biosafety. External assistance is therefore vital and such assistance has been/continues to be critical in the development of national biosafety capacity and in assisting the nation in fulfilling the requirements of the convention. Accessing GEF Funding has been challenging particularly as regards meeting the documentation requirements.

- Antigua & Barbuda (Second National Report)
77. Another setback has been the apparent decline in GEF resources for biosafety projects following the adoption of the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) by the GEF Council in 2005, which was replaced by the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) in 2010. Prior to the introduction of the

<sup>85</sup> Interviews, see Section 3.3 on the limits of the data collected

<sup>86</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/4

<sup>87</sup> Second National Report results

RAF, there were separate (ring-fenced) funds for biosafety that each country could access. Under the RAF and now the STAR the funding available for biosafety has been lumped in with the funds available for other biodiversity-related issues, under the biodiversity focal area. As such, countries are requested to set their own priorities regarding biodiversity issues (including biosafety) and utilise their indicative country allocations accordingly. This is intended to ensure that activities are country driven and based on national priorities. However, as a result, under the tight allocations for many competing priorities, there has been a general reluctance by many countries to use their country allocation to projects that address issues such as biosafety that are perceived as more preventative, precautionary and strategic in nature, compared projects addressing issues such as protected areas that produce immediate tangible results.

78. Accessing GEF funds has also been an issue for some Parties (see Box 8). In the second national reports, of the 112 countries that stated that they were eligible to receive GEF funding, 98 had reported having initiated a process to access GEF funds. Of these 98, none of the respondent characterized the process as very easy; 13 Parties characterised it as easy, 60 Parties as average, 20 Parties as difficult and 5 Parties as very difficult.<sup>88</sup> There is also the issue of cofinancing to access GEF funds, which is always a challenge for some countries, especially the least-developed countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

**Box 8:** The lengthy process and the strict yet generalised (one-fit-all) guidelines, make it difficult for Small Island Developing States such as Dominica to access funding from this agency, to implement the Cartagena Protocol efficiently.

- Dominica (Second National Report)

79. Some of the strengths of the Action Plan identified by interviewees and survey respondents are that it is a valuable guidance tool when starting biosafety capacity-building activities at the national level. Also, it is a tool that can provide on-going guidance for capacity-building initiatives through its list of key elements that Parties could address over the course of their progress. Many interviewees and survey respondents also noted that the guiding principles and approaches provide a conceptual basis for designing national capacity-building strategies and that the key elements requiring concrete actions are valuable as they point out the key Protocol issues that need to be addressed.<sup>89</sup>

80. With regard to approaches to capacity-building, there is a growing trend to go beyond workshops to more concrete actions. Some of the interviewees suggested such actions as the establishment of research laboratories, and on-the-ground training for farmers that use the LMOs.<sup>90</sup> There is also a need to improve the methods used to assess capacity-building needs to allow for a more strategic approach for donor agencies, recipients, educators and international organizations.<sup>91</sup>
81. In light of the Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress, adding the issues of liability and redress would be of value. Indeed, in paragraphs 9 and 11 of decision BS-V/11 that adopted the Supplementary Protocol the Parties agreed to take account, as appropriate, capacity-building relating to the implementation of the Supplementary Protocol in the next review of the Action Plan. Also, given the nature of biosafety as a preventative measure, some interviewees have felt that the potential benefits of LMOs are overlooked in the Action Plan.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> The percentages of respondents within the different regions/economic groups that characterized the process as *difficult* or *very difficult* are as follows: 32% within Africa, 29% in Asia-Pacific, 24% in GRULAC, 36% in LDCs and 10% of Parties within SIDS. No Party in CEE and WEOG characterised the process as *difficult* or *very difficult*.

<sup>89</sup> Note that these are views from the participants of the evaluation and not all of the Parties to the CPB

<sup>90</sup> Interviews, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>91</sup> UNU-IAS (2008) Internationally Funded Training in Biosafety and Biotechnology: Is it Bridging the Genetic Divide? and Interviews

<sup>92</sup> See Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

82. Biosafety, being a preventative measure, is not always seen as a priority issue countries and donor agencies. In some countries biosafety is still not universally accepted as a priority public policy issue, particularly at higher political levels. In part this has tended to hamper local political support and the adoption of national biosafety policies and legal instruments by relevant authorities.<sup>93</sup> In a number of countries, the issue is often championed by a very limited number of people, and often these people tend to move on to other fields.<sup>94</sup> In order to improve the overall process of capacity-building for biosafety, continued dialogue among a variety of stakeholders and continued public awareness on biosafety are key. There is also a need to continue promoting effective integration of biosafety activities into other relevant sectoral policies, strategies and programmes at the national level.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, provision of training modules would be helpful for countries to take on certain capacity development activities on their own. It is also important to provide assistance for capacity-building activities on the ground, including training of farmers who handle the LMOs.<sup>96</sup>

### 4.3 Impact

83. The final criterion used in this evaluation is the impact of the Action Plan. This has been reviewed based on the positive and negative changes produced by the Action Plan, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. The evaluation questions examined under this criterion were as follows:

1. To what extent has the Action Plan been a catalyst for capacity-building efforts under the Protocol?
2. In what way has the Action Plan guided and leveraged capacity-building efforts under the Protocol at the national, regional and international levels?

84. The impact criterion was selected to evaluate whether the Action Plan had catalysed, guided or leveraged any biosafety capacity-building initiatives. Since the revised Action Plan was approved in 2006, five years is long enough a period to evaluate any impacts. In general, the evaluation using the impact criteria is very challenging, as establishing direct causal links to benefits or results on a longer term basis is not so evident. Change is often more complex than direct cause and effect through one catalyst.

85. Although the Action Plan may not have resulted in the impact that was initially intended, there are some notable changes that have occurred as a result of its adoption. For some, the Action Plan was indeed the catalyst for their capacity-building initiatives; as was the case for the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Other countries were able to use the Action Plan as a means to engage stakeholders, and tailor their biosafety capacity needs to their own national priorities.

86. The number of training activities carried out has had a great impact in many countries. Some countries have been able to provide training for customs and other border control officers and other government staff. Another key development has been the increase in the use of the Internet as a means to exchange information at national and regional levels. The Action Plan not only catalysed access to funding by countries to undertake capacity-building initiatives but also guided bilateral institutions in providing funding for biosafety, as in the case for DANIDA.

87. The Action Plan has also provided a more focused and strategic approach to capacity-building initiatives. It has also been used as a tool to promote dialogue and debate among key stakeholders and Parties. Key elements of the Action Plan have provided better direction to capacity-building initiatives compared to the hitherto ad-hoc training activities and workshops. Furthermore, as a guiding tool, the Action Plan

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<sup>93</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/9

<sup>94</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/4

<sup>95</sup> UNEP-GEF (2008) Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects

<sup>96</sup> Suggestions provided by Interviewees and Survey respondents, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

does give countries a basis to initiate country-driven initiatives and has thus promoted ownership and leadership.<sup>97</sup>

88. One of the issues raised regarding the impact of the Action Plan has been the omission of measures in the Action Plan to ensure sustainability. Although there have been a number of initiatives and activities implemented, the sustainability of these activities remains elusive. The Action Plan does not provide guidance to ensure that the capacity-building activities developed by Parties and organizations incorporate a sustainability strategy.<sup>98</sup> Sustainability measures could help ensure that the initial investment made is not lost but leads to longer-term impacts. The 2006 Evaluation of GEF Support for Biosafety noted that many training activities, for example in risk assessment and risk management, were short-term and useful for raising awareness about the technical issues but were not effective in establishing sustainable technical capacity and in building the confidence for sound regulatory decision making.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> These are the views of the majority of participants of the evaluation, see Section 3.3 on limits of the data collection

<sup>98</sup> UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/5/INF/3

<sup>99</sup> GEF EO (2006) Evaluation of GEF Support for Biosafety

## 5 GENERAL FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

89. The following are some of the overall findings and lessons learned with regard to the implementation of the Action Plan:

### *Relevance of the action plan*

- (a) According to the interviewees and the survey respondents, the current Action Plan is a relevant and useful tool for guiding the capacity-building efforts of Parties in building their capacities for implementation of the Protocol. A number of respondents noted that in the absence of the Action Plan, there might have been a less focussed approach to capacity-building and limited dialogue on issues regarding capacity-building under the Protocol. However the Action Plan has been less relevant for donors who tend to provide funding based on their own priorities and areas of expertise. The second national reports revealed that only 37 Parties (28 per cent) have developed a national capacity-building strategy and 96 Parties (72 per cent) have not done so. Yet, 115 Parties (80 per cent) stated that they still have many capacity-building needs, 11 Parties (8 per cent) said they have a few more needs and only 18 Parties (12 per cent), 14 of which are from WEOG, stated that they did not have capacity-building needs. Therefore the Action Plan is still a relevant tool for most Parties that do not yet have a national capacity-building strategy in place. Many interviewees and respondents also noted that while the Strategic Plan for the Protocol 2011-2020 includes elements for a more results-oriented strategic approach to capacity-building it does not undermine the relevance of the Action Plan. However, the Action Plan in general needs to be updated in so that it is in line with the new Strategic Plan and the emerging needs of Parties (*refer to paragraphs 16, 17, 19, and 23*).

### *Progress made in implementing the Action Plan*

- (b) In general progress has been made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan. A number of initiatives aimed at contributing to the development and strengthening of capacities in biosafety have been implemented in various countries. In their second national reports on the implementation of the Protocol, 119 Parties (83 per cent) have stated that have undertaken capacity-building activities in biosafety and only 24 Parties (17 per cent) stated that they have not done so. A large number of Parties reported that they have undertaken activities with respect to the following elements of the Action Plan: institutional capacity (84 Parties); human resources capacity and training (88); public awareness, participation and education in biosafety (90); information exchange and data management (88); risk assessment (70); and identification of LMOs including their detection (62 Parties). However, very few activities have been undertaken under the following elements: handling of confidential information, technology transfer, implementation of documentation requirements and socio-economic considerations. With regard to risk assessment, 63 Parties (45% of the respondents) reported that they have acquired the necessary domestic capacity to conduct risk assessment, 56 Parties (39%) have established a mechanism for training national experts to conduct risk assessments, 95 Parties (67%) have established a mechanism for conducting risk assessments prior to taking decisions regarding LMOs, and 70 Parties (50%) reported that they have established guidelines for doing so (*refer to paragraph 28, 31, 32, and 37*).

### *Effectiveness of the Action Plan*

- (c) The Action Plan has been effective to varying degrees in guiding and supporting biosafety capacity-building activities at the national, regional, and international levels. There have been a number of initiatives developed and undertaken in line with the Action Plan. These include projects on the development and implementation of national biosafety frameworks (NBFs) funded by the Global



Environment Fund (GEF) and some projects undertaken by various regional and international organizations. However, there is limited evidence indicating that the Action Plan has been effective in guiding the planning or implementation of biosafety projects supported by bilateral and multilateral donors. Many donors and some organizations seem to have supported biosafety activities based on their own priorities without taking into account the Action Plan.

- (d) At the international level, most of the global-level activities specified in the Action Plan have been effective. Notably, the Biosafety Clearing-House is now fully functional and serving as an effective tool for information exchange. The Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the Action Plan has been effective in facilitating the sharing of information and experiences on biosafety capacity-building initiatives, through the capacity-building databases in the BCH, the coordination meetings and the online forum established in the BCH. The coordination meetings have provided a useful forum for key stakeholders to build relations, share information and experiences and exchange ideas on how to improve capacity-building for specific issues. However, some interviewees have noted that the level of participation in the coordination meetings has declined and in particular donor agencies have not actively taken part in them and this has partly undermined the effectiveness of the Coordination Mechanism. The Roster of Experts has also been developed and is perceived as a very useful tool though it has not yet been effectively used due to lack of funds to enable eligible Parties to pay for experts selected from the roster (*refer to paragraphs 56 and 64*).
- (e) At the regional and subregional levels, the Action Plan has been effective in guiding the planning and implementation of some initiatives. For example, the African Union Commission (AUC) reported that it used the Action Plan in the design of its Africa-wide biosafety project and the development of its regional strategy on biosafety. A number of regional and subregional initiatives have also been implemented in other in Asia, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the CBD Secretariat has conducted a number of training workshops at the regional level. In general, progress has been made in implementing the Action Plan at the regional level although, overall, capacity-building at this level remains weak. Information gathered from the interviews, the survey and the literature review has shown that a regional approach to capacity-building provides a valuable opportunity for Parties to exchange information, including success stories and lessons learned. It also allows Parties to share technical resources and expertise and to foster coordination and continued dialogue (*refer to paragraphs 51, 52, and 53*).
- (f) At the national level, the Action Plan has been moderately successful in guiding countries. Many interviewees and survey respondents indicated that the Action Plan has provided valuable guidance particularly for Parties at the early stages of capacity development in biosafety. However, for Parties that have advanced biosafety capacity, the Action Plan does not seem to offer much guidance or provide relevant indicative priority areas for consideration. These Parties are now able to establish specific needs tailored to their own priorities and as such the Action Plan is too broad for their current needs. Depending on their needs, some Parties do not undertake biosafety capacity-building activities *per se* but integrate biosafety into broader existing programme and systems. Two of the key factors that have been identified as limiting the use of the Action Plan as a guidance document are the lack of awareness of the Action Plan by some Parties and stakeholders, and the decrease in funding for biosafety (*refer to paragraphs 55, 56 and 74*).

### ***Impact of the Action Plan***

- (g) While it may be too early to evaluate its impact, the Action Plan has so far catalysed a number of activities in various countries and regions. For example respondents from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the African Union Commission stated that the Action Plan has indeed been the catalyst for their Biosafety capacity-building initiatives. The Action Plan has also guided some bilateral donor agencies, such as DANIDA, in planning their funding support for biosafety. The majority of interviewees and

survey respondents felt that the Action Plan has inspired a strategic and focused approach to capacity-building and has been used to engage relevant stakeholders and to leverage financial and technical support for biosafety (*refer to paragraphs 80 and 81*).

### *Design of the Action Plan*

- (h) Most interviewees and the survey respondents stated that the design of the Action Plan is generally useful and provides a good basis upon which Parties can determine what capacity-building activities to undertake and how. Most of the components of Action Plan are still valid and useful. However, some of them would need to be updated in light of the emerging needs of Parties and the experience gained. For example, it may be useful to prioritise and arrange the key elements of the Action Plan into administrative and technical elements in order to provide more clarity. As well, it may be necessary to add other key elements, such as liability and redress, which are missing. Section 4 (processes/steps) is a bit vague and outdated. It needs to be revised to provide more clarity and add details under each key process, especially with regard to funding requirements (*refer to paragraphs 58, 59, and 60*).
- (i) In its current form the Action Plan is viewed by many Parties, other governments and organizations more as a reference tool rather than an Action Plan. It outlines general guiding principles and approaches, key areas for which capacity-building action may be required as well as general processes/steps or strategies that governments may be taken into account in designing and implementing their biosafety capacity-building initiatives. However, it does not really serve as a plan of action since it does not include specific prioritised activities to be implemented by specific stakeholders within given timeframes (*refer to paragraphs 24, 55 and 60*).
- (j) The Action Plan needs to be redesigned to provide a clearer linkage with the main components of national biosafety frameworks and the Strategic Plan for the Protocol; include a manageable set of priorities to help Parties better prioritise and address their needs; and adopt a results-based approach. The results could be reported through the *Status of Capacity Building Activities Reports* provided by the Secretariat (*refer to paragraphs 28, 33, 67 and 78*).
- (k) The monitoring and coordination component of the Action Plan (section 6) has not been effective. There is little evidence in the documentation reviewed that the indicators for monitoring the Action Plan implementation, which were adopted by the first meeting of the Parties in 2004 and later revised at the fourth meeting, have been used by Parties and organizations. There is a need for a more detailed monitoring framework containing clear indicators linked to the relevant indicators Strategic Plan for the Protocol and well-defined data collection methodology outlining how and where the information will be collected and by whom (*refer to paragraphs 61 to 63*).
- (l) One of the main omissions in the current design of the Action Plan is the lack of measures for ensuring the sustainability of capacity-building initiatives and activities. The Action Plan needs to provide guidance to Parties on possible sustainability strategies that could be incorporated in their capacity-building activities to help ensure long-lasting impacts (*refer to paragraphs 66 and 83*).

### *Challenges to the use of the Action Plan*

- (m) Lack of funding is a biggest challenge affecting the implementation of the Action Plan. Although in the early years after the adoption of the Protocol a number of biosafety capacity-building activities received funding support from various sources, including multilateral and bilateral organisations, there has been a significant decrease in the amount and diversity of sources of funding available for biosafety in the last few years. According to the second national reports, 41 countries have provided support to other countries for capacity-building. Of these, 21 countries used bilateral channels, 9 countries used regional channels, and 11 countries used multilateral channels. Of the 88 Parties that have reported receiving

external support or benefited from collaborative activities with other Parties, 37% of the responses refer to bilateral channels, 23% to regional channels, and 40% to multilateral channels (*refer to paragraphs 56 and 71 to 73*).

- (n) The interviews and survey have also revealed that lack of awareness of the Action Plan by some Parties and stakeholders may have affected its implementation. Some National Focal Points indicated that they had never heard of the Action Plan (*paragraph 56*).

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

90. In light of the findings from the interviews, the survey results and the review of relevant documents, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. A new document containing the following two major components be developed by the Secretariat for consideration by the COP-MOP to replace the current Action Plan:
  - A Framework for Capacity-Building, based on the current Action Plan, which would serve as a general reference and guidance tool for Parties at different levels of progress in terms of capacity-building for biosafety. Like the current Action Plan, it would highlight the general guiding principles and approaches, key areas for which capacity-building action may be required as well as general processes/steps or strategies that Parties and relevant organizations may take into account in designing and implementing their biosafety capacity-building initiatives at national, regional and international levels. It would also highlight examples of success stories and lessons learned based on available documentation and experiences.
  - A results-based Action Plan for aligned with focal area 2 of the Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and also linked to the main components of National Biosafety Frameworks. The Action Plan could lay out concrete prioritised actions with specific targets and a limited number of indicators to be monitored, using an elaborated monitoring framework, and reviewed at the mid-term and end-of-term review of the Strategic Plan. This would help prioritize certain aspects of capacity-building and provide some focus for funding within a specific timeframe, and also allow for the elaboration of more detailed plans of action.
2. In light of the objectives and expected outcomes outlined in the new Strategic Plan, it would be useful if the 'Status of Capacity-Building Activities' reports prepared for consideration by the regular COP-MOP meetings also provided key results as a means to get a clearer sense of the progress achieved at all the different levels. In this regard, governments and relevant organizations would be requested to make submissions on both their activities and also on the results achieved. This could serve as a good measure of the outcomes for the capacity-building focal area of the Strategic Plan of the Protocol.
3. The operation of the Coordination Mechanism needs to be reviewed, especially with regard to the number, frequency and timing of the coordination meetings, as well as the objectives of the meetings and the selection of participants in order to improve participation and the outcomes of the meetings. More importantly, effort should be made to encourage the participation of donors and to identify more sources of funding.
4. Emphasis should be put on regional capacity-building approaches. The Secretariat could play a key role in motivating regional stakeholders and engaging donors to undertake a greater role in building capacity for biosafety and helping them coordinate and facilitate regional activities. Through a regional approach countries would have a better sense of what is happening closer to home and benefit from the

experiences of neighbouring countries. In addition, this would ensure that there is continued dialogue among stakeholders, as well as raise awareness regarding the Action Plan.

5. Sustainability measures should be included in the Framework for Capacity-Building mentioned above so that Parties have guidance to follow concrete sustainability guidelines in their activities. This would ensure that sustainability is taken into account in the design and implementation of biosafety capacity-building initiatives, and contribute to long-term impacts.
6. In light of the changes in the needs of Parties, a consultative process for the new direction regarding capacity-building for biosafety is recommended. This would give an opportunity for Parties to set priorities that would fit with the new Strategic Plan. In addition, this would allow for Parties and the Secretariat to redefine the terminology in the Action Plan to reflect current practices and uses.
7. Given the varying needs of Parties, a provision of training modules could be helpful for Parties to take on certain capacity development activities on their own. This could offer alternatives for Parties that not intend to actively pursue biotechnology and simply need guidance on how to integrate biosafety into existing systems. It could also provide an opportunity to involve non-Parties that would like to move forward with biosafety.

## 7 CONCLUSION

91. The Action Plan was drafted in the context of an emerging environmental concern, for which knowledge and capacity were limited. At the forefront, the Action Plan was designed to help Parties cope with this challenge.
92. In this context, the Action Plan at its inception and after its revision in 2006 was a relevant document that provided some valuable guidance and insight. However, given the overall progress made by Parties in building their capacities for biosafety the current Action Plan, although still relevant, needs some modifications in order to put it inline with the current trends in biosafety capacity development and the new Strategic Plan of the Protocol.
93. For the majority of the cases, the Action Plan provided a useful guidance tool for countries and organizations, such as the UNEP-GEF. In the absence of the Action Plan, there may have been a less focussed approach to capacity-building for biosafety and limited dialogue on the issue of capacity-building under the Protocol. In this regard, the Action Plan has made valuable contribution to biosafety capacity-building.
94. The design of the Action Plan includes good components, especially the guiding principles and key elements. However these components need to be updated to be more in line with the emerging country needs as well as with the Strategic Plan for the Protocol. In this regard, the Secretariat could develop two separate different tools; one that is based on the current Action Plan to make it a useful guiding tool for countries at all levels, and another one that is aligned directly with the new Strategy Plan. The latter document could include short-, medium-, and long-term goals in a results-based framework with specific targets and a limited number of indicators. This would allow for tracking and monitoring of capacity-building at the global level. The document may also be used to solicit for more biosafety funding support.
95. Although it has not fully achieved the expected outputs, the Coordination Mechanism has been a valuable tool in facilitating coordination and exchange of information, whether through the BCH or through its

meetings, and the Liaison Group. At the regional level, there is a need to improve coordination and exchange among Parties and there are many opportunities for doing so.

96. The overall funding for capacity-building for biosafety has decreased over the last few years, rendering the Action Plan underutilized. The funding issue is of grave importance, given the varying needs of countries and the fact that many countries have yet to undertake capacity-building initiatives and implement their national biosafety frameworks.
97. The role of the Secretariat in the capacity-building process is still very important. Clearly there is a need for the Secretariat to continue its work in conducting training workshops at regional and subregional levels and developing online training tools which Parties could use for continuous training.
98. Evidently, there is a need for such a tool as the Action Plan. However, the current Action Plan needs to be updated to respond to the varying needs of Parties and to be aligned with the new Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

## ANNEX 1: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

### CBD DOCUMENTS

Updated Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Biosafety Protocol:  
[http://bch.cbd.int/resources/capacitybuilding/annexbsiii3\\_revised\\_action\\_plan\\_en.pdf](http://bch.cbd.int/resources/capacitybuilding/annexbsiii3_revised_action_plan_en.pdf)

*COP-MOP 1, COP-MOP 2, COP-MOP 3, COP-MOP 4, COP-MOP 5*

See all capacity-building documents at: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_doc.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_doc.shtml)

*ICCP*

See all documents at: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_doc.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_doc.shtml)

*Coordination Meetings for Governments and Organizations Implementing and/or Funding Biosafety Capacity-building Activities*

See all the documents and reports at: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_meetings.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_meetings.shtml)

*Meetings of academic institutions and organizations involved in biosafety education and training*

See all the documents and reports at: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_meetings.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_meetings.shtml)

*Meetings of the Liaison Group on Capacity-Building for Biosafety*

See all the documents and reports at: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_art22\\_liaison.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art22_liaison.shtml)

### OTHER DOCUMENTS

FAO (2009) Building Biosafety Capacities: FAO's experience and outlook - An overview of the experience gained from FAO capacity-building projects in agricultural biotechnology and biosafety:  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1033e/i1033e00.htm>

GEF (2006) Evaluation of GEF's Support to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety:  
[http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Biodiversity-Biosafety-2006\\_0.pdf](http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/Biodiversity-Biosafety-2006_0.pdf)

Obonyo, D. *et al.* (2011) Identified Gaps in Biosafety Knowledge and Expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa. AgBioForum, The Journal of Agrobiotechnology Management and Economics. Volume 14, Number 2, Article 4.

UNEP-GEF (2006) A Comparative Analysis of Experiences and Lessons From the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Projects:  
[http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/UNEPGEFBiosafety\\_comp\\_analysisDec2006.pdf](http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/UNEPGEFBiosafety_comp_analysisDec2006.pdf)

UNEP (2008) Guidance towards Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks: Lessons Learned from the UNEP Demonstration Projects, found at:  
<http://www.unep.org/biosafety/files/Final%20National%20Biosafety%20Frameworks.pdf>

UNEP (2008) Learning from Experience - Lessons Learned from the Global UNEP-GEF-BCH Capacity-building Project: <http://www.unep.org/biosafety/files/Final%20GEF-Learning%20from%20Exper.pdf>

UNEP-GEF Building Capacity for the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety:  
<http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/capbdgbrochEN.pdf>

UNEP (2006) Building Biosafety Capacity: The Role of UNEP and the Biosafety Unit:  
[http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/UNEPGEFBiosafety\\_BrochureDec2006.pdf](http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/UNEPGEFBiosafety_BrochureDec2006.pdf)

UNEP-GEF UNEP-GEF Project on Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety:  
<http://www.unep.org/biosafety/Documents/UNEP-GEF%20Project%20on%20Building%20Capacity%20for%20Effective.pdf>

UNU-IAS (2007) UNU biosafety capacity-building assessment - Internationally Funded Training in Biotechnology and Biosafety: Is it Bridging the Biotech Divide?:  
[http://www.ias.unu.edu/resource\\_centre/Internationally%20Funded%20Training%20in%20Biotechnology%20and%20Biosafety\\_Is%20it%20Bridging%20the%20Biotech%20Divide.pdf](http://www.ias.unu.edu/resource_centre/Internationally%20Funded%20Training%20in%20Biotechnology%20and%20Biosafety_Is%20it%20Bridging%20the%20Biotech%20Divide.pdf)

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Biosafety capacity-building databases in the BCH: <http://bch.cbd.int/database/activities/>
- Biosafety Information Resource Centre: <http://bch.cbd.int/database/results/?searchid=506156>
- GEF-funded biosafety projects (database key word search “biosafety”): <http://www.gefonline.org>
- Web link to National Biosafety Frameworks (NBFs):  
<http://www.unep.org/biosafety/National%20Biosafety%20frameworks.aspx>
- Second National Reports for the Cartagena Protocol: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_natreports.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_natreports.shtml)

## ANNEX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Question	Indicator	Data Collection Method
RELEVANCE		
1(a) Is the Action Plan for Capacity-building for Biosafety still relevant under the Cartagena Protocol?		
To what degree is the Action Plan relevant in guiding efforts to implement Article 22 under the Cartagena Protocol?	Level of coherence of the Action Plan with COP-MOP decisions relating to capacity-building	Documentation Review
Has the relevance of the Action Plan changed since its inception?	Evidence of change in the relevance of the Action Plan	Interviews
		Survey
1(b) In what way is the Action Plan for Capacity-building for Biosafety still relevant in view of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol?		
In what way is the Action Plan still relevant in view of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol?	Level of coherence between the Action Plan and the Strategic Plan	Documentation Review
	Comparison between the elements of the Action Plan and the Strategic Plan	Documentation Review
	Perception of relevance	Interviews
		Survey
1(c) Does the Action Plan for Capacity-building for Biosafety still respond to the experiences, needs and priorities identified by Parties and other Governments?		
To what extent is the Action Plan still responsive to the needs and priorities of Parties and Governments?	Level of coherence of Action Plan with experiences, needs and priorities identified by Parties and Governments	Documentation Review
	Extent to which the Action Plan is still influencing/guiding the development of national and regional biosafety capacity-building projects and activities?	Interviews
		Surveys
	Examples of projects/ activities that have been influenced by or initiated	Interviews
		Survey

Question	Indicator	Data Collection Method
	in direct response to the Action Plan	
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>		
<b>2(a) How has the Action Plan supported the outcomes of the capacity-building initiatives implemented?</b>		
To what level has institutional capacity for biosafety improved?	Evidence of effective legislative and policy frameworks in place such as the National Biosafety Frameworks	Documentation review
	Level of implementation of the National Biosafety Frameworks	Documentation review
		Interviews
In what way has there been an improvement in human resources and training?	Number of available experts in the expert roster	Survey
		Documentation review
	Evidence of workshops and training undertaken for capacity-building for biosafety	Survey
How has the capacity for risk assessment and other scientific and technical expertise improved?	Evidence of outcomes that improved capacity for risk assessment	Documentation review
		Survey
How has public awareness, education and participation in biosafety improved?	Evidence of project outcomes that have improved public awareness, education and participation in biosafety	Documentation review
		Survey
To what degree has data management as well as the participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House improved information exchange?	Level of use of Biosafety Clearing-House by parties	Documentation review
	Accessibility of Biosafety Clearing house	Interviews
		Survey
How has scientific, technical and institutional collaborations at the subregional, regional and international levels improved?	Collaborations established by institutions and level of participation	Documentation review
		Survey
How has access to and transfer of technology and know-how improved?	Evidence of project outcomes to improve access to and transfer of technology	Documentation review
		Survey
To what degree, has the identification of LMO shipments as required by the Protocol improved?	Improved capacity to identify LMO shipments by parties	Documentation review
		Survey
To what degree have countries fulfilled the documentation requirements under Article 18.2 of the Protocol?	Evidence of improvement in national LMO documentation systems	Documentation review
		Survey
To what degree countries have improved on effectively and appropriately handling confidential information?	Existence of mechanisms to handle confidential information as reported by Parties	Documentation review
		Survey
In what way have unintentional and/or illegal transboundary movements of LMOs been effectively addressed?	Evidence of measures taken to address unintentional and/or illegal transboundary movements of LMOs Existence of national data	Documentation review
		Survey
Has there been an increase in scientific biosafety research relating to LMOs?	Evidence of increased academic activity relating to LMOs	Documentation review
		Survey
How have risks to human health been effectively taken into account in decision making regarding LMO?	Evidence of human health components in project outcomes	Documentation review
What are some of the emerging good practices and lessons learned	Good practices	Documentation review
		Survey



Question	Indicator	Data Collection Method
	Lessons learned	Documentation review
		Survey
<b>2(b) In what way has the Action Plan been effective in guiding capacity-building activities at the national, regional, and international level?</b>		
How has the Action Plan guided capacity-building activities at the national level?	Progress made in undertaking tasks established by the Action Plan	Documentation review
	Changes in capacity-building at the national level that are linked to the Action Plan	Survey
	Strengths of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at a national level	Interviews
		Survey
	Weaknesses of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at a national level	Interviews
		Survey
How has the Action Plan provided guidance to undertake capacity-building activities at the subregional and regional level?	Progress made in undertaking tasks established by the Action Plan	Documentation Review
	Strengths of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at the subregional and regional level	Interviews
	Weaknesses of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at the subregional and regional level	Interviews
What has been the progress of the implementation of the Action Plan at the international level?	Degree to which tasks have been undertaken as established by the Action Plan	Documentation review
	Strengths of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at the international level	Interviews
	Weaknesses of the Action Plan in guiding capacity-building activities at international level	Interviews
How has the Coordination Mechanism supported the implementation of the Action Plan?	Evidence of information sharing facilitated by the Coordination Mechanism	Documentation review
	Level of participation in the Liaison Group	Documentation review
	Level of participation at the coordination meetings and workshops	Documentation review
	Level of effectiveness of the Liaison Group	Interviews
What have been some the overall limits of the Action Plan?	View of major gaps and shortfalls of the Action Plan	Interviews
		Survey
	Corrective measures proposed	Interviews
		Survey
How has the monitoring and reporting been undertaken to support the implementation of the Action Plan?	Evidence that monitoring mechanism such as the use of indicators and reporting has been undertaken	Documentation
	Challenges in monitoring and reporting	Interviews
<b>2(c) Was the design of the Action Plan effective to attain its objective?</b>		
In what way has the design of the Action	Level to which the design has been	Interviews

Question	Indicator	Data Collection Method
Plan been useful in engaging parties to attain its goal?	useful in engaging stakeholders	Survey
	Overall strengths of the design of the Plan	Interviews
		Survey
	Overall weaknesses in the design of the Action Plan	Interviews
		Survey
To what degree have the guiding principles and approaches been followed?	Degree to which capacity-building initiatives were country-driven	Interviews
		Survey
	Evidence of national ownership and leadership of capacity-building initiatives	Documentation review
	Evidence of systematic and timely participation	Interviews
		Survey
	Evidence of a learning-by-doing approach	Documentation Review
	Evidence of synergy and complementarity among capacity-building activities	Documentation Review
	Evidence of use of a results-oriented approach	Documentation Review
	Evidence of policy dialogue with donors and organizations	Interviews
		Survey
	Evidence that biosafety activities are integrated	Interviews
	Evidence of nationally-designed and resourced activities at a national level	Interviews
	Evidence of high level political will and commitment to the Protocol	Interviews
To what degree have the key elements been addressed by parties?	Degree to which key elements have been addressed	Documentation Review
		Survey
To what degree have the processes and steps outlined in the Action Plan have been followed?	Degree to which each step has been followed	Documentation Review
	Average timeframe for the processes and steps to be undertaken	Documentation review
		Interviews
	Limits and challenges identified to undertake the processes and steps	Interviews
What are some corrective measures that can be taken to improve the design of the Action Plan?	Corrective measures proposed	Interviews
		Survey
	Key elements proposed	Interviews
		Survey
	Activities proposed	Interviews
		Survey
2(d) What has been the overall progress made towards achieving the objective of the Action Plan?		
In what way has the Conference of the Parties supported the Action Plan	Evidence of continued support of the Action Plan by the Conference of the Parties	Documentation Review
How has the CBD Secretariat supported the Action Plan?	Resources provided by the Secretariat	Documentation Review
	Activities undertaken by the Secretariat	Documentation Review
	Perception of the support provided by the Secretariat	Interviews
		Survey

Question	Indicator	Data Collection Method
What has been the level of support provided to developing countries?	Funds and projects funded by the GEF	Documentation Review
	Support provided by bilateral and multilateral donors	Documentation Review
	Support provided by other organizations	Documentation Review
In what way has the Action Plan guided the capacity-building activities or regional networks?	Regional networks and their level of involvement in capacity-building for biosafety in line with the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
In what way has the Action Plan guided the capacity-building activities of non-governmental organizations?	Non-governmental organizations and their level of involvement in capacity-building for biosafety in line with the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
In what way has the Action Plan guided the capacity-building activities of the private sector?	Private sector and its level of involvement in capacity-building for biosafety	Documentation Review
In what way has the Action Plan guided the capacity-building activities of academic institutions?	Academic institutions and their level of involvement in capacity-building for biosafety in line with the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
In what way could the Action Plan be better resourced?	Resource opportunities suggested by stakeholders and Parties	Interviews
		Survey
IMPACT		
3(a) To what extent has the Action Plan been a catalyst for capacity-building efforts under the Protocol?		
In what way, has the Action Plan catalyzed capacity-building activities at the national, subregional, regional and international level?	Capacity-building activities undertaken at national, subregional, regional and international levels as a result of the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
		Survey
What could be changed in the Action Plan that would catalyze countries to undertake capacity-building initiatives at the national level?	Changes brought forth to improve the Action Plan as a catalysis	Survey
3(b) In what way has the Action Plan guided and leveraged capacity-building efforts under the Protocol at the national, regional and international level?		
How has the Action Plan guided capacity-building efforts?	Evidence of a more strategic and focused approach to capacity-building for biosafety?	Interviews
		Survey
What have been ways in which the Action Plan has leveraged capacity-building efforts?	Biosafety activities that have included a capacity-building component as a result of the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
		Survey
	Capacity-building efforts that have included a biosafety component as a result of the Action Plan	Documentation Review
		Interviews
		Survey

## ANNEX 3: LIST OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Region	Country
Africa	Cameroon
	Côte d'Ivoire
	Egypt
	Gambia
	Mauritania
	Malawi
	Morocco
	Niger
	Nigeria
	Senegal
	Somali, East/Horn of Africa
Asia-Pacific	Cambodia
	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
	Solomon Islands
	Vanuatu
CEE	Bosnia and Herzegovina
	Czech Republic
	Lithuania
	Poland
	Republic of Macedonia
	Slovakia
GRULAC	Bolivia
	Brazil
	Honduras
	Mexico
	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
WEOG	Denmark
	Italy
	New Zealand
	Spain

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