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

Seventh meeting

Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 29 September - 3 October 2014

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

OPERATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) was established by Article 20 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety as part of the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity in order: (a) to facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with, living modified organisms; and (b) to assist Parties in implementing the Protocol. The Central Portal of the BCH is accessible online at <http://bch.cbd.int>.

2. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP), in its decision BS-VI/2, requested the Executive Secretary to: (a) collect, through Biosafety Clearing-House national focal points and online tools made available in the Biosafety Clearing-House, feedback from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations on existing capacity and experiences in using the Biosafety Clearing-House and the submission and retrieval of data, and to take this experience into account for future improvements to the Biosafety Clearing-House; (b) continue its collaboration with other biosafety databases and platforms (such as those of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) with a view to improving the utility of the Biosafety Clearing-House as a global mechanism for sharing information on biosafety; (c) continue to organize online forums and real-time online conferences on topics relevant to biosafety and the implementation of the Protocol and encourage Parties to make use of them; and (d) encourage greater use of the Biosafety Clearing-House to further promote and facilitate public awareness, education and participation of relevant stakeholders regarding the use of living modified organisms.

* UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/7/1 at <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/meetings/documents.shtml?eventid=5193>.

3. In the same decision, the COP-MOP urged Parties and invited other Governments to fulfil their obligations under the Protocol and the decisions of the meeting of the Parties, by updating all incomplete published national records with the mandatory fields required by the common formats.

4. In decision BS-VI/5 on matters related to the financial mechanism and resources, the COP-MOP recommended that the Conference of the Parties, in adopting its guidance to the financial mechanism, urge the Global Environment Facility (GEF), among other things, to “provide further support to all eligible Parties for capacity-building in the use of the Biosafety Clearing-House, based on experiences or lessons learned during the ‘Project on Continued Enhancement of Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House’ and using resources under the biodiversity focal area”.

5. In addition, decision BS-VI/12 on risk assessment and risk management, the COP-MOP also requested the Executive Secretary to create sections in the BCH where information on living modified organisms or specific traits that (i) might have or (ii) were not likely to have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, “could be submitted and easily retrieved”.

6. Further, in decision BS-VI/14 on monitoring and reporting, the COP-MOP requested the Executive Secretary to “assess, on the basis of the second national reports, the discrepancies and/or gaps in information made available by Parties through the BCH, and to assist Parties to submit, through the BCH and without further delay, the updated information contained in their reports”.

7. Section II of the present document provides a progress report on information sharing which are directly relevant to the objectives under the Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011 to 2020.¹ Section III provides some consideration on the current status of the BCH based on the indicators contained in the Strategic Plan. Section IV presents elements for a decision on the operation of the BCH. The annex attached hereto to this report contains: (a) a breakdown of records registered in the BCH; and (b) an assessment of relevant BCH indicators of the Strategic Plan.

II. PROGRESS ON INFORMATION SHARING ACCORDING TO THE RELEVANT STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (FOCAL AREA 4 AND ELEMENTS OF FOCAL AREA 2)

8. Under focal area 2 of the Strategic Plan, capacity-building in information sharing is identified as one of the operational objectives. Enhancing “the availability and exchange of relevant information” on the Protocol is also identified under focal area 4 as a strategic objective. The following sections present a progress report on implementation, to date, under these broad and targeted objectives.

A. Focal Area 2: Capacity-Building (operational objective 2.6)

9. Focal area 2 of the Strategic Plan focuses on capacity-building with a strategic objective to “further develop and strengthen the capacity of Parties to implement the Protocol”. One of the expected impacts of Focal area 2 is the “full use of information exchange systems” and operational objective 2.6, Information sharing, is designed “to ensure that the BCH is easily accessed by all established stakeholders, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition”.

10. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat has collaborated with the UNEP-GEF BCH II project in the development of new training material and in the organization of online training workshops (webinars). In particular, the following material has been developed and made available in five of the six official languages of the United Nations through the BCH help section:²

¹ Decision BS-V/16, annex (available at http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml).

² At <http://bch.cbd.int/help/topics/en/webframe.html>, under “Training Materials”.

- (a) Specific training materials, which include user manuals and case studies modules for customs officers and phytosanitary officers;
- (b) New BCH-Ajax manuals and live demonstration modules for the inclusion of BCH information in national BCH websites;³
- (c) New Hermes syntax guide (add-on to the Hermes guidance) for the development of national BCH websites through CBD-based Hermes instances.⁴

11. Between January and April 2013, approximately 50 webinars on the use of the BCH were organized, in five of the six official languages of the United Nations, by the UNEP-GEF BCH II project with the support of the Secretariat. A total of 410 participants from more than 90 countries attended the webinars. All webinar videos and presentations were recorded and made available on YouTube by the UNEP-GEF BCH II project, and all links were made available through the BCH.⁵

12. Finally, with a generous contribution from the Government of Japan, the Secretariat is currently developing an e-learning tool based on the experience gained over the past four years, from the training workshops conducted by the UNEP-GEF BCH project on the BCH. This e-learning tool will be made available through the BCH to enable BCH users of different categories to access a quick introduction to the Cartagena Protocol and on how “to find and retrieve information from the BCH”.

B. Focal Area 4: Information sharing (operational objectives 4.1-3)

13. Focal area 4 of the Strategic plan focuses on information sharing, and its strategic objective is “to enhance the availability and exchange of relevant information”. This focal area also sets out three operational objectives: (i) BCH effectiveness; (ii) BCH as a tool for online discussions and conferences; and (iii) information sharing other than through the BCH.

14. Operational objective 4.1, BCH effectiveness, aims “to increase the amount and quality of information submitted to and retrieved from the BCH”. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat carried out the following activities:

(a) In response to a request of COP-MOP, the Secretariat contacted Parties and informed them of the gaps that exist in their decision records (under Articles 10 and 11) registered in the BCH or required an accompanying risk assessment report (or summary). Parties were also notified about the discrepancies and/or gaps in information made available through the BCH on the basis of the Second National Reports and assisted, when requested by Parties, in registering the missing information. In this exercise, Parties were also informed about living modified organisms (LMOs) that were listed as commercialized in their countries by the Biotradestatus database,⁶ supported by the Global Industry Coalition (GIC), but were not registered in the BCH;

(b) All common formats of national records were updated to enable users to bring up-to-date old records marked as incomplete and re-publish them even if some mandatory fields remain incomplete;

(c) The Biosafety Expert common format was also updated. The main revision was a simplified “field of expertise” section to improve ease of registration of the biosafety experts;

³ The BCH AJAX Plug-in is a client side application, developed by the Secretariat, that can be easily integrated with any existing website to provide dynamic display of information from the BCH; Further information on the BCH AJAX Plug-in are available at <http://bch.cbd.int/resources/solutions>.

⁴ Hermes is a completed online Content Management System, developed by the Secretariat, which provides the building blocks of a national BCH. Further information on Hermes is available at <http://bch.cbd.int/resources/solutions>.

⁵ See http://bch.cbd.int/help/UNEPGEFBCHII_material.shtml.

⁶ See <http://www.biotradestatus.com>.

(d) In response to COP-MOP request a new common format was made available⁷ to both Governments and general users for the submission of any additional type of information with the option to link it to (i) previous notifications, (ii) any other BCH records, and/or (iii) biosafety thematic areas;

(e) A workflow mechanism was established, through the BCH, for the regular update of the list of background documents that can be linked to specific sections of the Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs;

(f) All of the records registered in the LMO, organism and gene registries were updated and revised;

(g) The LMO registry was expanded to include all LMOs presently available in the OECD, FAO, EFSA and Biotradestatus databases;

(h) In response to COP-MOP request a new feature was introduced in the LMO decisions pages which displays, when required, matching records from external databases. The first database made available was Biotradestatus, supported by GIC through CropLife International, for the regulatory and market status of agricultural biotechnology products. Similar arrangements are currently under way to include the OECD BioTrack Product Database⁸ and the FAO GM Foods Platform;⁹

(i) A major effort was undertaken during the intersessional period to fully integrate the BCH and the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House (ABS-CH) of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing into the revamped Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) of the Convention, as stipulated in Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Cartagena Protocol and Article 14, paragraph 1, of the Nagoya Protocol. The integration has resulted in all the Convention's clearing-houses now sharing a unified Application Programming Interface (API) for interoperability with third parties, a unified indexing mechanism for the integration of data through the main search interface, and a unified account system for easier access by all registered users. The API is designed, among other things, to provide full access to BCH data, and in general all CBD-CHM data, to all institutions and organizations wishing to display this information on their websites.

15. Operational objective 4.2, "BCH as a tool for online discussions and conferences," aims "to establish the BCH as a fully functional and effective platform for assisting countries in the implementation of the Protocol". In response to a request of COP-MOP, during the intersessional period, the activity of the Secretariat in this area focussed on the organization of 43 online discussion groups on eight different thematic areas of the Protocol and four real-time conferences on one thematic area.¹⁰ The discussion groups and real-time conferences were attended by approximately 1,500 participants from all of the global regions. Some of the discussion groups and real-time conferences were conducted in the official United Nations languages other than English. A breakdown of the participation in the discussion groups and real-time conferences is provided in table 1 below.

⁷ See <http://bch.cbd.int/managementcentre/edit/submission.shtml>.

⁸ See <http://www2.oecd.org/biotech/>.

⁹ See <http://www.fao.org/food/food-safety-quality/gm-foods-platform/en/>.

¹⁰ Data as of May 2014.

Table 1. Details of the online forums and real-time conferences held in the intersessional period

Thematic areas	Main Targets	No. of discussion groups	Parties		Non-Parties		Organizations		Total	
			countries	participants	countries	participants	institutions	participants	countries/ institutions	participants
BCH - IAC	BCH-IAC members	1	12	12	1	1	5	7	18	20
BCH on BCH	NFPs, NAUs and CNA	1	167	686	13	28	-	-	180	714
Detection & Identification	Lab scientists	6	38	73	4	10	-	-	42	83
Public Participation	Open	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	152
Regional Networks on PAEP	Open	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
Risk Assessment	RA Experts	14	53	214	6	21	58	82	117	317
Socioeconomic considerations (forum)	Open	5	34	95	3	10	9	9	46	114
Socioeconomic considerations (real-time)	Open	4	30	38	4	4	5	11	39	53
Total	-	43	56 (average)	1118	5 (average)	74	19 (average)	109	74 (average)	1525

16. In addition to the above forums, and in order to allow for interaction among users on specific thematic areas, some collaborative portals are also active through the BCH.¹¹

17. Operational objective 4.3, “Information sharing other than through the BCH”, aims “to enhance understanding through other information exchange mechanisms”. During the intersessional period, in this area, the Secretariat focussed its activities on enhancing the dissemination of BCH-related information through the following means:

(a) Offline copies of the BCH in DVD format are shipped quarterly, in all six official languages of the United Nations, to BCH-NFPs of countries that have limited Internet connectivity;

(b) All BCH users may subscribe to the BCH Current Awareness Service,¹² an email-based weekly bulletin that provides a list of the latest information registered in the BCH. The bulletin also reports on the BCH news posted by BCH users and the Secretariat;

(c) The BCH news, the Cartagena Protocol news and the biosafety-related notifications are also disseminated through Really Simple Syndication (RSS)¹³ and social networking services (i.e. Twitter, Facebook and a dedicated BCH YouTube channel).¹⁴ Access to all of the BCH-related Internet channels is provided on both the main page of the BCH Central Portal and the Cartagena Protocol website.

¹¹ A list of the “online forums and portals” is available under the “Resource” section of the BCH at <http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/>.

¹² At <https://bch.cbd.int/member/subscriptions.shtml>.

¹³ At <http://bch.cbd.int/resources/rss.shtml>.

¹⁴ The Cartagena Protocol is present on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/BCHCPB>, on Facebook (together with CBD) at <http://www.facebook.com/UNBiodiversity> and on “YouTube” at <http://www.youtube.com/user/bchcpb>.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS OF THE BCH BASED ON THE INDICATORS CONTAINED IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

18. Section B of the annex contains an assessment of the BCH according to the indicators of the Strategic Plan¹⁵ based on (a) the breakdown of records registered in the BCH (annex, section A), (b) the results of the Second National Reports,¹⁶ (c) the results of the “Survey to gather information corresponding to indicators in the Strategic Plan”,¹⁷ and (d) the results of the “Collection of feedback on existing capacity and experiences in using the BCH”.¹⁸ The assessment confirms increasing progress towards the achievement of the relevant objectives identified in the Strategic Plan.

A. Breakdown of records registered in the BCH

19. Since the presentation of the breakdown summary of BCH records to COP-MOP 6 in March 2010:

(a) The total number of records registered in the BCH has increased by 14.6%; the number of records registered by countries has increased by 21.5%, the total number of BCH records referencing LMOs, Genes or Organisms has increased by 10%, and the total number of biosafety publications available through the Biosafety Information Resource Centre has increased by 4.5% (see annex, section A, table 1);

(b) The total number of decisions/communications registered in the BCH has increased by 29%, of which the number registered by Parties has increased by 38%. The total number of decisions under Articles 10 and 11 registered in the BCH has increased by 32% and those registered by Parties have increased by 41% (see annex, section A, table 3);

(c) The total number of risk assessment summaries registered in the BCH has increased by 37% and those registered by Parties have increased by 41% (see annex, section A, table 3);

(d) The percentage of decisions on Articles 10 and 11 that are supported by an accompanying risk assessment summary has increased from 73% in 2012 to 76% in 2014. The percentage of those registered by Parties in the same period has remained consistent at approximately 87%, notwithstanding the increase of 41% in the number of relevant decisions (see annex, section A, table 3).

B. Collection of feedback on existing capacity and experiences in using the BCH

20. In response to a COP-MOP request, in decision BS-VI/2, regarding the collection of feedback “on existing capacity and experiences in using the BCH and the submission and retrieval of data”, the Secretariat made available in May 2014, through the BCH and in all the six official languages of the United Nations, a short survey and requested Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to complete the survey before 7 June 2014.¹⁹

21. The results of the survey are summarized as follows:²⁰

(a) The number of BCH users participating in the survey was 162. They were homogeneously distributed among the different categories of users (National Focal Points: 40%, National Authorized Users: 19%, Officers of Competent National Authorities: 7%, and General Users: 31%), as

¹⁵ The elements of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety are available at http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml#vision.

¹⁶ At <https://bch.cbd.int/database/reports/>.

¹⁷ At <https://bch.cbd.int/database/reports/surveyonindicators.shtml>.

¹⁸ The detailed results of the survey are available in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/7/INF/XX12 available at <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/meetings/documents.shtml?eventid=5193>.

¹⁹ Notification 2014-070 of 6 May 2014 available at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2014/ntf-2014-070-bch-en.pdf>.

²⁰ For detailed results of the survey, see UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/7/INF/12.

well as geographically (Africa: 36%, Asia and the Pacific: 26%, CEE: 9%, GRULAC: 25%, and WEOG: 5%);

(b) On average, participants reported visiting the BCH more than “once a month” and registering information more than “once a year”. On an arbitrary scale, they rated the ease of retrieving information at 80%, the ease of registering information at 70%, and the quality of the information available through the BCH at 80%;

(c) Most of the participants did not request changes to the BCH. Changes and/or additions to the system for retrieval of information were requested by 18% of the participants and to the common formats for the registration of information by 10% of the participants;

(d) More than half of the participants (59%) reported having participated in BCH mediated capacity-building workshops, and half of the participants (50%) expressed an interest in receiving such training.

C. Indicators of the Strategic Plan that are relevant for the assessment of the BCH

22. An analysis of the additional information collected through the “Survey to gather information corresponding to indicators in the Strategic Plan” showed that several indicators could be updated for a better assessment of BCH progress in attaining the relevant objectives identified in the Strategic Plan.

23. The complete assessment of the relevant indicators is reported in section B of the annex to this report, and the most relevant changes, since May 2012, are summarized as follows:

(a) Both the “Total traffic from users to the BCH” and the “Number of new users” increased by 28% between 2010 and 2013 (indicator 4.1.3²¹);

(b) The number of submissions to the BCH from developing countries and countries with economies in transition has increased by 23% since May 2012 (indicator 2.6.1) and the percentage of traffic originating from the same group of countries increased from 40% in 2010 to 62% in 2013 (indicator 2.6.2);

(c) The number of Internet links to the BCH has increased by 51% since May 2012 (indicator 4.1.4);

(d) The number of AIA/domestic decisions made available through BCH has increased by 32% since May 2012 (indicator 4.1.7);

(e) An average of 33% (+5% since May 2012) of Parties participated in online discussions and real-time conferences on the BCH between 2012 and 2014 (indicator 4.2.1) and the number of participants has increased by 31% since May 2012 (indicator 4.2.2).

IV. ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT DECISION

24. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, having considered the general operation of the Biosafety Clearing-House, the ongoing implementation of its programme of work and the progress report on the implementation of the objectives of the Strategic Plan, may wish to:

(a) *Welcome* the improvements made to the central portal of the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(b) *Request* the Executive Secretary to continue its collaboration with other biosafety databases and platforms (such as those of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and *invite* Parties and other Governments to inform their representatives in other international forums of the possibility of

²¹ Strategic Plan indicators are numbered according to the relevant operational objectives (as in the table at https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml#oo1_1).

retrieving electronically all data registered in the Biosafety Clearing-House in order to make them available through other related websites;

(c) *Urge* Parties, and *invite* other Governments to register in the Biosafety Clearing-House all their decisions on living modified organisms and related risk assessments as requested under the Protocol, with special emphasis on first intentional transboundary movements of living modified organisms for intentional introduction into the environment that are intended for field trials since this category is currently underrepresented in the Biosafety Clearing-House;

(d) *Recommend* that the Conference of the Parties, in adopting its guidance to the Global Environment Facility with respect to support for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, urge the Global Environment Facility, as the financial mechanism of the Convention, to promptly approve further projects, available to all eligible Parties, that address the need for capacity-building for the use of the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Annex

A. BREAKDOWN OF RECORDS SUBMITTED TO THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE (AS OF MAY 20, 2014)

Table 1
Number of records submitted to the Biosafety Clearing-House

Category of information	Number of BCH records ²²		Increase (%)
	May 2012	May 2014	
Protocol focal points	182	183	0.5%
BCH focal points	192	190	-1.0%
Article 17 focal points	83	92	10.8%
Competent National Authorities	363	369	1.7%
National biosafety websites and databases	124	129	4.0%
Total records for national contacts	826	841	1.8%
National laws	720	795	10.4%
Bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements	23	16	-30.4%
Total records for laws & regulations	757	826	9.1%
Decisions under AIA (introduction into the environment)	476	593	24.6%
Decisions under Article 11.1 (LMO-FFPs)	659	856	29.9%
Other decisions and declarations	292	162	-44.5%
Total records for country's decisions and other communications	972	1265	30.1%
Total records for risk assessments reports	651	961	47.6%
Roster of experts members	129	157	21.7%
Reports on expert assignments	1	2	100%
Total records for the roster of experts	130	159	22.3%
Total records submitted by countries	3,336	4,052	21.5%
LMO registry	399	374	-6.3%
Genetic elements registry	323	417	29.1%
Organism registry	174	195	12.1%
Total records for Registries	896	986	10.0%
Capacity-building activities, projects and opportunities	372	389	4.6%
Capacity needs and priorities	30	31	3.3%
Total records for capacity-building activities	402	420	4.5%
Total records for international organizations	261	292	11.9%
Total records for Biosafety Information Resource Centre (BIRC)	1,368	1,430	4.5%
Total number of records in the Biosafety Clearing-House	6,263	7,180	14.6%

²² The difference between the sum of the records listed in each category and the total number of records is due to the possibility that one record contains information for more than one category (for example, a focal point may have more than one role); in such a case, the same record is listed two or three times in the breakdown.

Table 2

Number of records of a “country’s decisions and other communications” submitted to the Biosafety Clearing-House and details on decisions submitted under Articles 10-11 and “risk assessments”

Country	Total number of decisions / communications submitted to the BCH	Decisions under Articles 10 and 11				Risk assessments submitted
		Art. 10 only	Art. 11 only	Art. 10 and 11	Total	
<i>Parties</i>						
Austria	6	0	0	0	0	1
Barbados	1	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	4	3	1	0	4	4
Brazil	44	3	0	38	41	43
Bulgaria	2	0	0	0	0	0
Burkina Faso	2	0	0	0	0	2
China	23	0	20	2	22	0
Colombia	156	61	90	0	151	110
Costa Rica	36	23	0	0	23	34
Cyprus	1	0	0	0	0	0
Denmark	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dominican Republic	1	0	0	0	0	0
European Union	54	4	47	2	53	53
Germany	28	27	1	0	28	28
Honduras	4	3	1	0	4	4
India	5	5	0	0	5	5
Indonesia	1	0	0	1	1	1
Italy	1	1	0	0	1	1
Japan	101	8	35	56	99	99
Kenya	1	0	0	0	0	1
Malaysia	14	3	11	0	14	14
Mexico	128	11	116	0	127	86
Netherlands	2	0	2	2	4	2
New Zealand	25	0	21	0	21	0
Niger	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nigeria	1	1	0	0	1	0
Norway	4	1	1	0	2	1
Philippines	60	0	55	0	55	60
Republic of Korea	111	0	110	0	110	110
Romania	2	2	0	0	2	1
Saint Lucia	1	0	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	1	1	0	0	1	1
South Africa	13	3	0	0	3	0
Spain	153	152	1	0	153	153
Sweden	9	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	8	0	8	0	8	0
Syrian Arab Republic	1	0	0	0	0	0
Uruguay	12	0	0	12	12	12
Viet Nam	5	5	0	0	5	5
Subtotal Parties	1023	317 (33%)	520 (55%)	113 (12%)	950 (100%)	831 (87%)
<i>Non-Parties</i>						
Argentina	24	9	9	6	24	13
Australia	35	6	24	5	35	10
Canada	64	15	14	34	63	61
United States of America	119	0	30	89	119	0
Subtotal non-Parties	242	30 (12%)	77 (32%)	134 (56%)	241 (100%)	71 (29%)
TOTAL	1265	347	597	247	1191	902

		(29%)	(50%)	(21%)	(100%)	(76%)
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Table 3

Comparison of data between the number of a “country’s decisions and other communications” and “risk assessments” submitted to the Biosafety Clearing-House in May 2012²³ and May 2014

	Total number of decisions / communications submitted to the BCH		Decisions under Articles 10 and 11								Risk assessments submitted	
			Decisions under art. 10 only		Decisions under art. 11 only		Decisions under both art. 10 and 11		All decisions under Art. 10 and 11 (total)			
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Parties	744	1023 (+38%)	234	317 (+35%)	347	520 (+50%)	91	113 (+24%)	672	950 (+41%)	589	831 (+41%)
Non-Parties	233	242 (+4%)	12	30 (+150%)	78	77 (-1%)	143	134 (-6%)	233	241 (+3%)	71	71 (0%)
TOTAL	977	1265 (+29%)	246	347 (+41%)	425	597 (+40%)	234	247 (+6%)	905	1191 (+32%)	660	902 (+37%)

²³ See UNEP/CBD/ BS/COP-MOP/6/3, annex, table 2.

B. ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT BCH INDICATORS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (AS OF 20 MAY 2014)²⁴

Focal area 2: Capacity-building, Operational Objectives 2.6: Information sharing																				
2.6.1. Number of submissions to the BCH from developing countries and countries with economies in transition	2,537 BCH records (62.6%) [+23% since May 2012]	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH</p> <p>Number and percentage (in parentheses) of BCH records, submitted by developing countries and countries with economies in transition</p> <p>Percentages are referred to the total number of records submitted by all countries as reported in table 1.</p>																		
2.6.2. Amount of traffic from users to the BCH from developing countries and countries with economies in transition	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Sessions</th> <th>New Users</th> </tr> <tr> <th>-----</th> <th>-----</th> <th>-----</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>97,703 (61.6%)</td> <td>61,781 (62.4%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>121,137 (64.3%)</td> <td>69,447 (64.0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>81,476 (54.5%)</td> <td>46,191 (54.4%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>49,187 (39.8%)</td> <td>30,468 (39.3%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Sessions	New Users	-----	-----	-----	2013	97,703 (61.6%)	61,781 (62.4%)	2012	121,137 (64.3%)	69,447 (64.0%)	2011	81,476 (54.5%)	46,191 (54.4%)	2010	49,187 (39.8%)	30,468 (39.3%)	<p><i>Source:</i> Google Analytics (2010-2014)</p> <p>Numbers and percentages (in parentheses), per year, of “Sessions” and “new users” (see Google’s definitions below) originated from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.</p> <p>Percentages are referred to the total number of “sessions” and “new users” reported under indicator 4.1.3. below.</p> <p>Sessions: Total number of sessions within the date range. A session is the period time a user is actively engaged with your website, app, etc.</p> <p>New users: The number of first-time users during the selected date range.</p>
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Focal area 4: Information sharing, Operational Objectives 4.1: BCH effectiveness																				
4.1.1. Ratio of risk assessment summary reports as against number of decisions on LMOs	831 Risk Assessment records (87%) [-1% since May 2012]	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH</p> <p>Number of Risk Assessment records submitted by Parties</p> <p>Percentage (in parentheses) is referred to the total number of decision records where the subject includes “Decision on LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment (according Article 10 or domestic regulatory framework)” or “Decision on LMOs for direct use as food or feed, or for processing (Article 11, LMOs-FFPs)”.</p>																		

²⁴ Strategic Plan indicators are numbered according to the relevant operational objectives (as in the table at https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml#oo1_1).

4.1.2. Number of publications contained in the Biosafety Information Resource Centre	1430 BCH-BIRC records [+4% since May 2012]	<i>Source:</i> BCH Number of BCH-BIRC records (virtual library) available in the BCH.																		
4.1.3. Amount of traffic from users to the BCH	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Sessions</th> <th>New Users</th> </tr> <tr> <th>-----</th> <th>-----</th> <th>-----</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>158,584</td> <td>99,043</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>188,352</td> <td>108,146</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>149,422</td> <td>84,907</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>123,476</td> <td>77,503</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Sessions	New Users	-----	-----	-----	2013	158,584	99,043	2012	188,352	108,146	2011	149,422	84,907	2010	123,476	77,503	<i>Source:</i> Google Analytics (2010-2014) Total numbers of ‘Sessions’ and ‘New Users’ (see Google’s definitions below) per year. Sessions: Total number of sessions within the date range. A session is the period time a user is actively engaged with your website, app, etc. All usage data (Screen Views, Events, Ecommerce, etc.) is associated with a session. New users: The number of first-time users during the selected date range.
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4.1.4. Number of references to the BCH	Links to the BCH: 438, 258 [+51% since May 2012] Number of results in Google when searching for “Biosafety Clearing-House”: 94,700 [+26% since May 2012]	<i>Sources:</i> Google and Google Webmaster Tools Links counted as net of links originating from cbd.int domain.																		
4.1.5. Number of countries with focal points registered in the BCH	CPB-NFP: 178 countries [+1% since May 2012] BCH-NFP: 190 countries [-1% since May 2012] Art17-CP: 92 countries [+28% since May 2012]	<i>Source:</i> BCH																		
4.1.6. Number of countries/regions having published biosafety laws and or regulations on the BCH	159 countries [+3% since May 2012]	<i>Source:</i> BCH																		
4.1.7. Number of AIA/domestic decisions available through BCH	1191 decision records [+32% since May 2012]	<i>Source:</i> BCH Number of decision records submitted by Parties where the subject includes “Decision on LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment (according Article 10 or domestic regulatory framework)” or “Decision on LMOs for direct use as food or feed, or for processing (Article 11, LMOs-FFPs)”.																		
4.1.8. Number of users of the BCH requesting improvement on accuracy, completeness or timeliness of information	N/A	Data not available																		

Focal area 4: Information sharing, Operational Objectives 4.2: BCH as a tool for online discussions and conferences		
4.2.1. Percentage of Parties participating in online discussions and real-time conferences on the BCH	<p>Parties: 56/167=33% (on average) [+5% since May 2012]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCH-IAC: 12, (7%, -2%) • BCH on BCH: 167 (100%,0) • Detection: 38, (23% +12%) • Risk Ass. 53, (32%, +1% since 5/2012) • Socioeconomic: 34 (20% -1%) 	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH (2012-2014)</p> <p>Average and breakdown of participating Parties to BCH forums and real-time conferences.</p>
4.2.2. Number of participants in online discussions and conferences, their diversity and background	<p>Participants: 1,525 [+31% since May 2012]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCH-IAC: 20 (0% since 5/2012) • BCH on BCH: 714 (+5%) • Detection: 83, (+144%) • Public Participation: 152 (N/A) • Regional Networks on PAEP: 72 (N/A) • Risk Ass.: 317 (+13%) • Socioeconomic (forum): 114 (+24%) • Socio-economic (real-time): 53 (N/A) 	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH (2012-2014)</p> <p>Total number and breakdown of participants to BCH forums and real-time conferences.</p>
4.2.3. Number of capacity-building activities aimed to increase the transparency, inclusiveness and equity of participation in the BCH	<p>Thematic areas: 6 [no variation from 2010-2012] (Risk assessment, BCH, Detection, Public Participation, Socioeconomic issues)</p> <p>discussion groups: 43 real-time conferences (1 round): 4</p>	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH (2012-2014)</p> <p>Number of BCH forums and real-time conferences.</p>

Focal area 4: Information sharing, Operational Objectives 4.3: Information sharing other than through the BCH		
4.3.1. Number of events organized in relation to biosafety	<p>67 events recorded in the BCH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official CBD meetings: 18 • Capacity Building activities and Academically accredited Biosafety Courses: 27 • Events from the BCH News: 22 <p>About 552 events or more reported in the survey for the last 2 years (2011-2013) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Parties (6% of the respondents): 25 or more • 19 Parties (17% of the respondents): 10 or more • 30 Parties (28% of the respondents): 5 or more • 37 Parties (34% of the respondents): one or more • 16 Parties (15% of the respondents): none 	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH (2012-2014)</p> <p>Number of record available in the BCH Capacity-Building category under “Capacity-Building Activities, projects and opportunities” and “Academically-accredited biosafety courses” for the period May 2012 – May 2014</p> <p><i>Source:</i> “Review of the information gathered through a dedicated survey and corresponding to indicators in the strategic plan”²⁵</p>
4.3.2. Number of biosafety-related publications shared	<p>1430 BCH BIRC records [+4% since May 2012]</p> <p>About 3427 publications or more reported in the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Parties (3% of the respondents): 100 or more • 3 Parties (3% of the respondents): 50 or more • 23 Parties (21% of the respondents): 10 or more • 47 Parties (43% of the respondents): one or more • 33 Parties (30% of the respondents): none 	<p><i>Source:</i> BCH</p> <p>Number of records available in the BCH-BIRC</p> <p><i>Source:</i> “Review of the information gathered through a dedicated survey and corresponding to indicators in the strategic plan”²⁵</p>

²⁵ Available at <http://bch.cbd.int/database/record.shtml?documentid=105532>