

Ref.: BS/EDM/KGM/jh

16 January 2001

NOTIFICATION

Madam/Sir,

**Re: African regional meeting on the Biosafety Clearing-House
and the clearing-house mechanism, 26-28 February 2001, Nairobi, Kenya**

As you may be aware, Article 20 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity establishes a Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) as part of the clearing-house mechanism under Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention, in order to facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with, living modified organisms; and to assist Parties to implement the Protocol.

At the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP), the Executive Secretary was requested to analyse the identified capacity-building and financial requirements of the developing countries, 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, to enable their active participation in the pilot phase of the BCH. In support of this objective, a regional meeting will be convened for Africa from **26 to 28 February 2001**, in Nairobi, Kenya, to provide countries of the region with an opportunity to express their needs and expectations with regard to the establishment of this pilot phase, keeping in mind the broader context of the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention.

The three-day regional meeting will be held at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, and will consider issues relevant to the operation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism in Africa. I would like to invite Parties and Governments to nominate one participant for this workshop, preferably qualified in one of the following fields: management of biosafety-related issues (such as notifications for decision-making); information-sharing systems and database-management; and/or experience with the clearing-house mechanism of the CBD. A provisional agenda is attached and the annotated agenda and background papers for the meeting will follow shortly by courier. Please note that the meeting will be held in English and French.

The Secretariat will support the participation of one representative of each African country Party to the Convention. This includes a round-trip air ticket on the most economical and direct route and a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for the duration of the meeting. Countries that wish to solicit such assistance are requested to provide the required information on the enclosed nomination form and forward it to the Secretariat before **Friday, 2 February 2001**.

To: CBD National Focal Points – Africa Region

Cc: ICCP Focal Points and CHM Focal Points – Africa Region

.../2

In order to further assist the deliberations of this workshop, Parties, Governments and relevant organizations are kindly requested to submit their views and needs with regard to the operation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and or the Clearing-House Mechanism, as well as any other relevant information they may wish to convey to the Secretariat prior to the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: Participant nomination form
Provisional agenda for the meeting

Nomination form for the African regional meeting on the
Biosafety Clearing-House and the Clearing-House Mechanism
26-28 February 2001, Nairobi, Kenya

This form must be returned to the CBD Secretariat before Friday, 2 February 2001
Please return by fax to +1 514 288-6588

Participant details:

Family Name:	First Name:
Title (Mr / Ms / Dr / etc.):	Sex:
Job title:	Employer:
Address for correspondence:	
Telephone number (business hours):	Telephone number (after hours):
Facsimile number:	E-mail address:
Areas of expertise (please indicate any that apply): Biosafety regulation / Clearing-House Mechanism / Information-sharing / Other (please specify):	

To be completed by the CBD National Focal Point making the nomination:

Nominated by Government of: _____

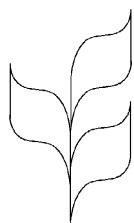
Name of CBD National Focal Point: _____

Signature of Focal Point: _____ Date: _____

Please return completed form to:

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
World Trade Center
393 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 300
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y-1N9, Canada

Facsimile: + 1 (514) 288-6588
Telephone: + 1 (514) 288-2220
E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

Distr.
LIMITED

UNEP/CBD/BCH/Afr.Reg/1/1
12 January 2001

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING ON THE
BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE AND THE
CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
Nairobi, 26-28 February 2001

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1. Election of officers;
 - 2.2. Adoption of the agenda;
 - 2.3. Organization of work.
3. Issues for in-depth consideration:
 - 3.1. Information exchange under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
 - 3.2. Existing biodiversity and biosafety information-exchange mechanisms in Africa;
 - 3.3. Building capacity for information exchange under the Convention and the Protocol;
 - 3.4. Synergies and differences in the implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism in Africa.
4. Preparation of regional needs assessments and priorities for action.
5. Conclusions and recommendations.
6. Adoption of the report.
7. Closure of the meeting.
