

Ref: SCBD/SEL/VN

29 November 2001

Dear Madam/Sir,

Notification: Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-sharing

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Convention, I would first like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, which was held from 22 to 26 October 2001 in Bonn, Germany.

In the implementation of follow-up actions to the meeting, I would like to invite your organisation to submit relevant information to the Secretariat, as further detailed below.

The report of the meeting, contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/6, is attached. It is also available on the CBD website www.biodiv.org under documents for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Annex to the report contains recommendations adopted by the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on ABS, for submission to the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting, on the following issues:

- Draft Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising out of their Utilization
- Other approaches, including the development of an action plan for capacity-building
- Role of intellectual property rights in the implementation of access and benefit-sharing arrangements

In its recommendation on other approaches, the Working Group requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, to convene, as soon as possible and depending on voluntary financial contributions by Parties and other donors, an open-ended expert workshop on capacity-building for access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. The workshop is to further develop draft elements for an Action Plan on Capacity-building for access and benefit-sharing.

In this respect, Parties, Governments, relevant international organisations, non-governmental organisations and the private sector were invited to submit, as soon as practicable, to the Executive Secretary, information regarding capacity-building needs, priorities and existing initiatives for capacity-building for access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing.

To: Relevant international organisations, non-governmental organisations and the private sector



In light of the above, you are hereby invited to submit relevant **information regarding needs, priorities and existing capacity-building initiatives on access and benefit-sharing** and your inputs on **possible contributions your organisation** could make to address these needs, to the Secretariat as soon as possible and no later than **31 December 2001**, taking into account the attached questionnaire, as appropriate. This information will be compiled and a report prepared by the Secretariat for submission to the Open-ended Workshop.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support to the work of the Convention.

Accept Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING

QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES OF PARTIES

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify the needs and priorities of Parties and stakeholders in the implementation of access and benefit-sharing arrangements.

I. On the basis of the following list of key areas for capacity-building in relation to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing:

- Development of national access and benefit-sharing policy, administrative and legislative measures
- Elaboration and implementation of contractual agreements on ABS
- Development of information systems for information management and exchange
- Assessment, inventory and monitoring of biological resources and traditional knowledge, including taxonomic capacity
- Valuation of genetic resources and market information, including production and marketing strategies
- Development of national research and development facilities in scientific and technical areas
- Means for the protection of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources
- Funding and resource management
- Monitoring and assessment of capacity building initiatives

- 1) Please indicate priority areas requiring capacity-building/strengthening in your country, to assist with the implementation of ABS arrangements, by numbering the elements of the above list by order of priority (from 1 to 9);
- 2) Please indicate whether other areas related to access and benefit-sharing and requiring capacity-building should be included in this list.
- 3) Please indicate in which of the following areas your country has expertise and experience to share with others to assist in the implementation of access and benefit-sharing arrangements.

II. According to the key areas for capacity-building listed above, please provide further information regarding your country's specific capacity building needs for each of these, more particularly with respect to: (a) public awareness and education; (b) human resource development; (c) institutional strengthening; (d) systemic capacity (i.e. national policy, legal and regulatory framework, processes and interactions among national institutions)

III. For each of the key areas listed above, please indicate whether capacity-building initiatives have already been carried out or are being considered.

IV. On the basis of needs and priorities established by Parties, the Workshop will assist in identifying the appropriate means of implementation and promote coordination among the various actors involved in capacity-building initiatives. In your view, how could the following entities best facilitate capacity-building to assist Parties with the implementation of ABS arrangements:

- The CBD Secretariat
- The GEF
- Other bilateral and multilateral donors
- Intergovernmental organizations
- Regional networks
- Non-governmental organizations
- Private Sector/Industry
- Scientific/Academic Institutions

V. What other suggestions do you wish to make on capacity-building as it relates to access and benefit-sharing

Please submit to the Secretariat any other information available in your country relevant to capacity-building for ABS, e.g.: existing programmes and initiatives; provision of technical and financial assistance to interested Parties.