



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY
PROTECT BIODIVERSITY IN DRYLANDS

22 May
2006



ACHIEVING THE 2010 TARGET!

Ref.: SCBD/BS/KGM/jh/55000

1 June 2006

NOTIFICATION

Request for information to be registered with the Central Portal of the Biosafety Clearing-House and submissions regarding constraints on making information available

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am pleased to convey to you a copy of the decision BS-III/2 on Operation and activities of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH), which was adopted by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP/3) held from 13 to 17 March 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil. A copy of the full report of the meeting is available on the website of the CBD Secretariat at <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-03>.

I would like to draw your attention to those parts of the decision in which Parties and other Governments are invited to provide information through the BCH and to invite you to contact the Secretariat if you require any assistance in this regard.

Please also note that those Governments that have identified constraints on making information available in a timely manner and/or implemented strategies to overcome these difficulties are invited to share their experiences with the Secretariat. The Executive Secretary is requested to prepare, on the basis of these submissions, a compilation report for circulation at the fourth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. I would therefore like to invite you to submit your views and suggestions to the Secretariat on this issue as soon as possible, but **no later than 14 December 2007**, in order to enable us to prepare a report to assist the meeting of the Parties in its deliberations.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your support to the work of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and look forward to our continued cooperation.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

To: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) National Focal Points
CBD National Focal Points (where CPB focal points have not yet been designated)
BCH National Focal Points



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BS-III/2. *Operation and activities of the Biosafety Clearing-House*

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety,

Taking note of the progress report on the implementation of the multi-year programme of work for the operation of the Biosafety Clearing-House, and relevant information contained in the interim national reports on implementation of the Protocol,

Taking note of the report of the second meeting of the Compliance Committee (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/3/2),

Welcoming the participation of Governments and international organizations that have already provided information to the Biosafety Clearing-House,

Recalling the need for capacity-building to enable developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing states among them, to effectively use the Biosafety Clearing-House, and taking into account the limited capacities of these Parties to provide information to the Biosafety Clearing-House,

Emphasizing that the provision of sufficient relevant information is essential for the effective operation of the Biosafety Clearing-House, and recognizing the important role of the Biosafety Clearing-House in implementing the Protocol,

1. *Urges* Parties, Governments and other users to participate in the Biosafety Clearing-House by contributing or continuing to contribute information as soon as possible, whether directly through the management centre of the Central Portal, or through the development of nodes that are interlinked and interoperable with the Central Portal, or other options for national participation as appropriate;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to collaborate with nodes that are interlinked and interoperable with the Central Portal to ensure full accessibility of information through the Biosafety Clearing-House;

3. *Recognizing* the limited data available in some categories of information in the Biosafety Clearing-House, *urges* Parties and other Governments to include information pertaining to decisions on the release or import of living modified organisms and risk assessments taken prior to entry into force of the Protocol;

4. *Invites* those Governments that have identified constraints on making information available in a timely manner and/or implemented strategies to overcome these difficulties to share these experiences with the Secretariat for circulation to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, no later than six months prior to that meeting;

5. *Recalls* the requirement under Annex II of the Protocol to provide any unique identification of living modified organisms intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing under Article 11 and *requests* Governments to also provide information relating to unique identification when registering decisions under the Advance Informed Agreement procedure, where available;

6. *Encourages* Parties, Governments and other users to continue to use the Management Centre to provide information, and/or to develop national, regional, sub-regional and institutional nodes that are interlinked and interoperable with the Central Portal, as appropriate;

7. *Reminds* Parties that information must be directly registered with the Central Portal even where it is available on a national website, in order to comply with the information-sharing obligations;

8. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and donor organizations including the Global Environment Facility (GEF), when formulating projects and programmes for capacity building in biosafety, to take into account the need for Parties to be able to provide summary information in the common formats for reporting information (particularly keywords for categorizing records) in an official language of the United Nations to enable registration of such information with the Central Portal;

9. *Invites* Parties, Governments and international organizations to continue to make relevant biosafety information available through the Biosafety Information Resource Centre;

10. *Welcomes* ongoing initiatives in capacity-building, such as the Biosafety Clearing-House training workshop supported by the Secretariat in collaboration with the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to support such capacity-building activities in partnership with organizations such as UNEP-GEF;

11. *Recalls* the invitation previously extended to donor Governments and organizations to assist 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, and especially States with limited or no Internet access, to access and use the Biosafety Clearing-House, particularly in the areas of improved capacity for data collection and data management at the national level, strengthening of core human resources at the national level, and the establishment of appropriate infrastructure to share information at national, regional and international levels;

12. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in order to ensure the rights of Parties arising from in particular Article 11 of the Protocol, to make easily available decisions and other information on living modified organisms for food, or feed, or for processing, risk assessments on living modified organisms, and decisions taken under the Advance Informed Agreement procedure;

13. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to undertake translation of the Central Portal interface into the six official languages of the United Nations, and *calls upon* Parties, Governments and other donors to provide the required financial resources;

14. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, with a view to ensuring value for money, to undertake an external security audit of the Central Portal and its infrastructure to ensure full security of this information, and to minimize any chance of any loss of information, and *calls upon* Parties, Governments and other donors to provide the required financial resources;

15. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to develop non-Internet based mechanisms for countries to access information in the Biosafety Clearing-House, such as circulating information registered with the Central Portal on CD-ROMs on a quarterly basis to those Governments that request such facilities;

16. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to undertake another survey of Biosafety Clearing-House users to compare improvements against existing baseline data, and to submit this information for consideration by the Parties at their fourth meeting as part of the review of the implementation of the Protocol envisaged in the medium-term programme of work.