

Ref.: SCBD/BS/MPM/CG/jh/67587

3 December 2009

## NOTIFICATION

### **Extension of the Discussion Groups of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management to 14 December 2009**

Madam/Sir,

During the fourth COP-MOP, the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol agreed on the need for further guidance on specific aspects of risk assessment and risk management, and established an Open-ended online forum on specific aspects on risk assessment and an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management.

The Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management is meant to allow a wide range of experts to share their views on specific topics of risk assessment of LMOs and is accessible at [http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/forum\\_ra.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/forum_ra.shtml).

To date, 151 Experts have been nominated by Parties and 11 experts by non-Parties to take part in the Forum. The complete list of participants to the Open-ended Forum may be found at [http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/participants\\_ra.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/participants_ra.shtml).

The views shared by the risk assessment experts through Open-ended Forum served as very valuable input into the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management, at its first meeting on 20 to 24 April 2009.

The second AHTEG meeting will be held in April 2010. There are five Discussion Groups currently taking place on the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH). These Discussion Groups were scheduled to end on 7 November 2009. However, the participation from Government nominated Experts has been low.

In order to gather more views and inputs from the nominated experts and observers, the duration for the Discussion Groups will be extended to 14 December 2009.

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

In addition to the Discussion Groups, Regional Real-time Online Conferences are tentatively scheduled to take place in February 2010.

The outputs of the ongoing Discussion Groups and upcoming Real-time Conferences will be submitted to the AHTEG at its second meeting on 19-23 April 2010 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

With the view to improving the effectiveness of the ongoing Open-ended Online Forum, which may also affect the deliberations by the Parties on any such future initiative, I would kindly invite you to urge the Experts representing your country to actively engage in the Open-ended Forum.

Further, it is noted that nomination of new Experts to the Forum may still be done by going to <http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferencing/riskAssessment/expertNomination.shtml> (please note that access to this website is restricted to National Focal Points).

The CBD Secretariat is available to facilitate the participation of Experts in the Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management.

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

Ahmed Djoghlaif  
Executive Secretary