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1 August 2011

NOTIFICATION

Electronic Network of Laboratories and Online Discussion Groups on the Identification of Living Modified Organisms

Madam/Sir,

Paragraph 5 of decision BS-V/9 invites Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to nominate national and international reference laboratories with the view to establishing, through the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH), an electronic network of laboratories to facilitate the identification of living modified organisms as well as the sharing of information and experience. Furthermore, the sixth meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee on the BCH recommended that the Secretariat explore the possibility of facilitating interaction among detection laboratories through, for example, an online forum.

Accordingly, Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations are invited to nominate laboratories to form an electronic network through the BCH. Nominations should be made through the Biosafety Clearing-House by using the online common format available at <http://bch.cbd.int/managementcentre/edit/organization.shtml>. An offline common format is also available for download under “Biosafety Organization, including Laboratory for detection and identification of LMOs” at <http://bch.cbd.int/managementcentre/register/> to assist users to gather and organize their records prior to submission.

Laboratories that are already registered as organizations in the Biosafety Clearing-House are invited to update their existing records to include additional information about their activities on the detection and identification of living modified organisms.

A series of online discussion groups will be convened through the BCH to enable the laboratories in the electronic network to share information and experience. Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations are also invited to submit topics for consideration during the online discussions. Submissions should be made to secretariat@cbd.int.

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

Nominations of laboratories to the electronic network may be made at any time but to facilitate the online discussion groups, **nominations and submissions of topics should be received no later than 30 September 2011.**

Additional information on the electronic network of laboratories and the online discussion groups will be made available through the Collaborative Portal on the Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification of Living Modified Organisms in the Biosafety Clearing-House: http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/forum_art18.shtml.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support towards the work of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

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

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary