



Ref.: SCBD/BS/GF/da/81009

12 November 2012

NOTIFICATION

Process towards responding to decision BS-VI/12 on Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Madam/Sir,

In its decision BS-VI/12¹, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP) decided to extend the Open-ended Online Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and bring to a close the current Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Risk Assessment and Risk Management. The COP-MOP further established a new AHTEG on Risk Assessment and Risk Management in accordance with the terms of reference and modalities of work in the Annex to the decision, attached below for ease of reference.

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that the Open-ended Online Forum is scheduled to reconvene in December 2012 to contribute to the following tasks: (a) provide input to assist the Executive Secretary in his task to structure and focus the process of testing the guidance, and in the analysis of the results gathered from the testing, (b) coordinate, in collaboration with the Secretariat, the development of a package that aligns the Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms (e.g. the Roadmap) with the training manual “Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms” in a coherent and complementary manner, for further consideration of the Parties, with the clear understanding that the Guidance is still being tested; and (c) consider the development of guidance on new topics of risk assessment and risk management, selected on the basis of the Parties’ needs and their experiences and knowledge concerning risk assessment.

In preparation for the discussions in the Open-ended Online Forum, I am pleased to invite you to (i) update and revise the records and contact information of the experts from your country who are currently registered as participants on the Open-ended Online Forum,² and (ii) further nominate experts from your country, who are actively involved in scientific disciplines relevant to risk assessment and/or risk management, to participate in the Open-Ended Online Forum.

¹ http://bch.cbd.int/mop6/advance_unedited_compilation_mop6_decisions.pdf

² A list of the current participants can be found at http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/participants_ra.shtml.

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



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Nominations of experts by Parties and other Governments are to be submitted by the National Focal Points, preferably online, through the BCH at <http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferencing/riskAssessment/expertNomination.shtml>.³ When selecting experts, countries are reminded to follow the eligibility criteria as outlined for technical and scientific experts for the Roster of Biosafety Experts. All the updates and nominations are to be sent to the Secretariat as soon as possible, preferably before the end of November 2012. Please note that only registered experts will be able to participate in the forum.

The online discussions under the Open-ended Online Forum will provide initial input to guide the work of the AHTEG on Risk Assessment and Risk Management. The AHTEG will produce the final documents to be presented to the seventh meeting of the COP-MOP. Members of the AHTEG will be selected by the Secretariat, in consultation with the COP-MOP Bureau, from among those experts nominated by Parties on the basis of their expertise, and their active participation in the Open-ended Online Forum, taking into account geographic distribution, gender balance and with a view to achieving a balance between past and new members.

Further to decision BS-VI/12, the Secretariat would like to further reiterate the decision to invite Parties to translate the Guidance into national languages and to make such translated versions available through the Biosafety Clearing-House for wide dissemination, in order to facilitate the testing of the Guidance at national, regional and subregional levels.

Additional details regarding both the Open-ended Online Forum and the AHTEG on Risk Assessment and Risk Management will be made available in due course.

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

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary

³ In case of difficulties in submitting this information online, a common format for the appointment of a biosafety expert, which is available for download at the same internet address indicated above, should be completed and sent to the Secretariat via email (secretariat@cbd.int). Nominations that are not submitted electronically through the BCH must (a) clearly indicate that the expert is being nominated to participate in the Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and (b) be signed by the Cartagena Protocol National Focal Point.

Annex to decision BS-VI/12 on Risk assessment and risk management (Articles 15 and 16)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE OPEN-ENDED ONLINE FORUM AND AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Methodology

1. The open-ended online forum and the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall work primarily online on the following issues in the given order of priority:

(a) Provide input, *inter alia*, to assist the Executive Secretary in his task to structure **and** focus the process of testing the guidance, and in the analysis of the results gathered from the testing;

(b) Coordinate, in collaboration with the Secretariat, the development of a package that aligns the Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms (e.g. the Roadmap) with the training manual “Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms” in a coherent and complementary manner, for further consideration of the Parties, with the clear understanding that the Guidance is still being tested;

(c) Consider the development of guidance on new topics of risk assessment and risk management, selected on the basis of the Parties’ needs and their experiences and knowledge concerning risk assessment.

2. Subject to the availability of funds, the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall meet once face-to-face prior to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

Expected outcomes

3. The open-ended online forum and the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall work together with a view to developing and achieving the following:

(a) Moderated online discussions relating to the testing of the practicality, usefulness and utility of the Guidance;

(b) A package that aligns the Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms (e.g. the Roadmap) with the training manual “Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms” in a coherent and complementary manner; and

(c) A recommendation on how to proceed with respect to the development of further guidance on specific topics of risk assessment, selected on the basis of the priorities and needs indicated by the Parties with the view of moving toward the operational objectives 1.3. and 1.4 of the Strategic Plan and its outcomes.

Reporting

4. The open-ended online forum and the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall submit their final reports detailing the activities, outcomes and recommendations for consideration by the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

5. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management shall also operate the mechanism set out in paragraph 6 of this decision for the regular updating of the background documents to the Guidance and submit a report on its activities related to updating the background documents to the Guidance to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.