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1 February 2019

NOTIFICATION

Risk Assessment and Risk Management under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: submission of information and call for expression of interest

Dear Madam/Sir,

In [decision CP-9/13](#), the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) decided to establish a process for the identification and prioritization of specific issues regarding risk assessment of living modified organisms. It also decided to consider at its tenth meeting, whether additional guidance materials on risk assessment are needed for (a) living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives, and (b) living modified fish.

The process agreed to in decision CP-9/13 entails the submission of views, the commissioning of studies, discussions through an online forum, work by an ad hoc technical expert group (AHTEG), consideration of the outcomes by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), and recommendations by the SBSTTA to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol.

The table below presents a tentative timeline for the implementation of the activities foreseen as part of this process.

Date	Activity
February 2019	Invitation to submit information (see below)
February-June 2019	Commissioning of studies (see below)
15 March 2019	Deadline for the submission of information
March 2019	Invitation to nominate experts for the online forum and the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group
Fourth quarter of 2019 (tentative)	Online forum on risk assessment and risk management (discussions will focus on the studies and information received through the submissions)
December 2019 or January 2020 (tentative)	Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment (subject to the availability of funds)
May 2020 (tentative)	Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

To: Cartagena Protocol National Focal Points, CBD National Focal Points (where CPB focal points have not yet been designated), relevant organizations, and indigenous peoples and local communities

cc: SBSTTA National Focal Points

Submission of information

Pursuant to paragraph 10 of decision CP-9/13, I am pleased to invite Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and relevant organizations to submit information relevant to the work of the online forum and the AHTEG.

The online forum will assist the AHTEG in the following tasks:

- Review the commissioned studies and perform an analysis on living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish according to annex I of decision CP-9/13, and supported by the data in the studies;
- Consider the needs and priorities for further guidance and gaps in existing guidance;
- Make recommendations on (i) the need for guidance to be developed on risk assessment of living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish; and (ii) any adjustments to annex I of decision CP-9/13.

Accordingly, Parties and observers may wish to submit information related to:

- a) Experience in undertaking risk assessment of living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish (detailing how and for which cases); or else, lack of experience in doing so;
- b) Challenges experienced or foreseen in undertaking risk assessment of living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish;
- c) Specific needs (if any) to properly undertake risk assessment of living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives.

Kindly submit your information as soon as possible but **no later than 15 March 2019**. Please note that submissions should be sent through an official letter addressed to the Executive Secretary by e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int.

The information submitted will be made available for consideration by the online forum and the AHTEG.

Call for expressions of interest for studies on living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish

The Secretariat is also advertising a call for expressions of interest from candidates interested in undertaking the studies on living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives and living modified fish requested by paragraph 11(a) of decision CP-9/13. More information is available at: <https://www.cbd.int/secretariat/rfp/>.

I thank you for your cooperation and continued support for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

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

Cristiana Paşca Palmer, PhD
Executive Secretary