

NOTIFICATION

Submission of information on synthetic biology and nomination of experts to participate in the Open-ended Online Forum on Synthetic Biology

Dear Madam/Sir,

In decision 15/31, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity established a process for broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment of the most recent technological developments in synthetic biology and agreed to start its work.

The Conference of the Parties also decided to establish a multidisciplinary Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology (multidisciplinary AHTEG) to support the process for broad and regular horizon scanning, and requested the Executive Secretary to convene online discussions of the Open-ended Online Forum on Synthetic Biology to support the work of the multidisciplinary AHTEG.

In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and relevant organizations to provide the Executive Secretary with relevant information on trends in new technological developments in synthetic biology to inform the horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment.

The various elements of the decision will be carried out in a systematic manner, through a continuous process comprising: (i) submission of information on synthetic biology; (ii) discussions through the Open-ended Online Forum; (iii) at least one meeting of the multidisciplinary AHTEG; and (iv) peer-review of the outcomes of the multidisciplinary AHTEG. The outcomes of this process will be submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at its twenty-sixth meeting to be held in 2024.

Accordingly, at this stage, I am pleased to invite Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and relevant organizations to:

(a) Submit information and supporting documentation relevant to (i) the trends in new technological developments in synthetic biology referred to in paragraph 6 of decision 15/31, which correspond to the trends identified in the report of the 2019 Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology¹; (ii) any additional trend that should be considered.

Submissions from Parties should be made through the National Focal Points of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In the case of organizations, information should be submitted through the Head of such organization. Information should be submitted via e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int as soon as possible, but no later than **28 February 2023**.

(b) Nominate experts to participate in the Open-ended Online Forum on Synthetic Biology, which will take place from 20 to 31 March 2023. CBD National Focal Points or Heads of organizations, as appropriate, are kindly requested to submit nominations of experts via e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int clearly indicating the name and e-mail address of each nominee and enclosing a brief description of their relevant experience

¹ [Report of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology](#), Section I, paragraph 5.

To: CBD National Focal Points, relevant organizations, and indigenous peoples and local communities
cc: SBSTTA National Focal Points, Cartagena Protocol National Focal Points, ABS Protocol Focal Points

in the field of synthetic biology. In line with decision [14/33](#), nominees are also required to complete the interest disclosure form.²

Nominees will be subsequently contacted by the Secretariat to facilitate their registration and participation in the Open-ended Online Forum. The Online Forum is open to all interested participants, but they must be registered in order to contribute to the online discussions. Nominations of experts to the Open-ended Online Forum on Synthetic Biology must be received by **28 February 2023**. Information on how to access the Online Forum will be provided in due course through the following link: <https://www.cbd.int/synbio>.

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

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
Executive Secretary

² Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/forms/conflict-interest-form-en.pdf>