



## PRESS RELEASE

### THE UN MEETING ON BIOSAFETY ENDS WITH AN AGREEMENT TO ADVANCE WORK ON THE ISSUE OF SOCIOECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS

*Hyderabad, 6 October 2012* - The sixth meeting of the governing body of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ended last night here in Hyderabad, India, with an agreement to advance discussions to clarify socioeconomic issues associated with living modified organism (LMOs). Those discussions are intended to assist Parties to the Protocol that may wish to consider socioeconomic factors in reaching decisions on the import such organisms. Some 1500 delegates from more than 100 countries attended the five-day meeting.

The delegates agreed to convene a group of experts to further clarify the issue of socioeconomic considerations and to conduct further research and exchange information and experiences on the issue.

Agreement was also reached on a number of other complex issues, including risk assessment, response actions in event of unintentional movement of LMOs across national borders and types of documentation accompanying shipments of LMOs. Delegates commended the progress made in the development of “Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms” by a group of experts and encouraged Parties to test the guidance in actual cases of risk assessment and share their experiences.

The delegates also agreed on an improved plan of action on capacity-building to support the implementation of the Protocol and adopted further steps to strengthen the Biosafety Clearing-House – an online information exchange facility under the Protocol.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Mr. M.F. Farooqui, Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests of India, and Chairman of the meeting, thanked delegates for their constructive ideas and the spirit of compromise which contributed to the success of the meeting. He welcomed the offer made by the Government of Republic of Korea to host the next meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, noted that: “Parties have found common ground on all the issues that were on the agenda of the meeting. In particular, they made notable progress on the issues of, socio-economic

considerations and risk assessment of LMOs and adopted an action plan on capacity-building aligned with the ten-year Strategic Plan for the Protocol”

-----

### *Notes for Editors*

1. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Its objective is to contribute to ensuring the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms that may have adverse effects on conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health.

2. The Protocol was adopted on 29 January 2000 in Montreal, Canada and entered into force on 11 September 2003. To date, 163 countries and the European Union have ratified or acceded to it.

3. The Protocol is named after the Colombian city of Cartagena where the final round of its negotiations was launched.

4. The governing body of the Protocol, known as the Conference of the Parties to Convention on Biological Diversity serving as meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (or COP-MOP, in short), has held five meetings – in Kuala Lumpur in February 2004; in Montreal in June 2005; in Curitiba, in March 2006; in Bonn in May 2008; and in Nagoya, in October 2010.

5. Article 27 of the Protocol states that: “The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol shall, at its first meeting, adopt a process with respect to the appropriate elaboration of international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms, analysing and taking due account of the ongoing processes in international law on these matters, and shall endeavour to complete this process within four years.”

6. For additional information, please contact:

Ms. Ulrika Nilsson at [ulrika.nilsson@cbd.int](mailto:ulrika.nilsson@cbd.int)

Mr. Charles Gbedemah at [charles.gbedemah@cbd.int](mailto:charles.gbedemah@cbd.int)

Additional information is available at the following websites:

Protocol website: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/>

MOP 6 website: <http://bch.cbd.int/mop6/>

MOP 6 media website: <http://bch.cbd.int/mop6/media/>

Frequently asked questions: [http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_faq.shtml](http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_faq.shtml)