



Biodiversity is life



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is our life

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

The Biosafety Protocol is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity which aims to ensure the safe handling, transport and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biodiversity, also taking into account risks to human health. The Protocol establishes procedures for regulating the import and export of LMOs from one country to another.

There are two main procedures, one for LMOs intended for direct introduction into the environment, known as the Advance Informed Agreement (AIA) procedure, and another for those used for food, feed or processing (LMOs-FFP). Under the AIA procedure, countries are required to ensure that a risk assessment of the LMO is carried out in a scientifically sound and transparent manner.

Based on the results of the risk assessment a country can decide to import or not to import the LMO. Under the procedure for LMOs-FFP, countries that decide to place such LMOs onto the market are required to make public their decision by entering it into a central information system known as the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH). If a country decides to import an LMO that is to be released into the environment, it is required to communicate its decision as well as a summary of the risk assessment to the BCH.

When a country decides to allow the import of an LMO, the Protocol also requires that LMOs approved for shipment from one country to another must be safely transported, handled and packaged. The shipments must be accompanied by documentation that clearly identifies the LMOs.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int/biosafety



Fast Facts

- ▶ Modern biotechnology involves taking genetic material from one organism and inserting it into another to give it a desired characteristic. While this technology promises to generate benefits for humankind and contribute to sustainable development, there are concerns that its products, in particular living modified organisms (LMOs), may have negative effects on biodiversity and human health
- ▶ The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety entered into force on 11 September 2003. To date, more than 150 countries are Parties to the Protocol
- ▶ The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP) is the governing body of the Protocol. The COP-MOP 5 in Nagoya, Japan, will be held 11-15 October 2010 (<http://www.cbd.int/mop5/>)
- ▶ The Cartagena Protocol is one of the key international agreements contributing to achieving a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth

Learn More

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ▶ www.cbd.int/biosafety

Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) ▶ <http://bch.cbd.int>

Brochure on the Protocol—Reducing the environmental risks of modern biotechnology
▶ www.cbd.int/programmes/outreach/awareness/publications.shtml?grp=cpb

Biosafety Protocol News (newsletter) ▶ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/newsletters/bpn>

Register your initiative for the IYB: Capacity-building opportunities databases in the Biosafety Clearing-House, materials and information on opportunities for supporting projects related to public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms

▶ <http://bch.cbd.int/database/activities>

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Tel.: +1 514 288 2220
Fax: +1 514 288 6588
iyb2010@cbd.int

www.cbd.int/biosafety