



United Nations
Environment Programme

UNEP-GEF Project for Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House



Global Environment
Facility

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Second Quarterly Progress Report on the UNEP-GEF Project for Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) September 2004

Introduction

1. In the last three months, July – September 2004, a number of activities have been undertaken by the BCH team to enable countries to participate in the project

Current Status

Developing Material for Training

2. Four interactive modules on the following four topics are on the way to completion. These modules will be used as training tools by the regional experts to help countries understand their obligations relating to the BCH as Parties and in assisting them to use and enter information in the BCH.

- **Module 1. “Obligations of the Cartagena Protocol”**
- **Module 2. “Using the BCH”**
- **Module 3. “National BCH”**
- **Module 4. “Knowledge Management and Networking”**

3. In addition, a training package for regional experts is being developed in collaboration with UNITAR and InWEnt. This will include a three-week intensive curriculum based on adult-learning methodologies to train regional experts to assist participating countries to:

- Make a choice of national participation in the BCH based on the options recommended by the SCBD;
- Assess their current situation vis-à-vis the BCH and to help them analyse their needs for the nBCH;
- Analyse and put in place a sustainability strategy to ensure that longer-term requirements for the continued use of the BCH are in place right from the beginning;
- Train at national level workshops on the use and obligations relating the BCH.

Country-Level Participation

4. As of 30 September 2004, 51 countries have forwarded to the Biosafety Unit endorsement letters from their GEF Focal Points, informing us of their strong interest in participating.

5. A “Practical Handbook” for countries to participate in the BCH project has been developed and will be forwarded to the 51 countries that have indicated their interest in participating, on

agreement of content. In addition, a sample MOU has been prepared by the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit and will be forwarded to these 51 countries as soon as it has been cleared by UNEP.

6. Participating countries will be able, starting March 2005, to access fully trained and knowledgeable regional experts to assist them with issues relating to their participation in and implementation of the project.

7. In addition, based on the recommendations of COP-MOP1, UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit has submitted to the GEF Council, for its November work programme, an add-on project to the current BCH project which will expand eligibility for 89 additional countries.

Regional experts

8. The terms of reference for the regional experts have now been finalised. The BCH team consulted with the Secretariat of the CBD before finalising the TORs. In addition, the BCH team also carried out a peer review process by requesting the experts and scientists that were present at the workshop in May 2004, to review and comment on the TORs.

9. A call for regional experts will soon be placed through advertisement in several journals, including the Economist, El Pais, Jeune Afrique L'Intelligent, Pravda, Al Ahram etc. A selection panel consisting of the SCBD, ITU, STAP and UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit, will meet on 9 and 10 December 2004 to finalise the list of regional experts. From January 2004 onwards, 4 three-week training workshops will be carried out in Malaysia, Egypt, Brazil and Slovenia to train the experts in issues relating to the BCH set-up and use. The experts can then be requested by countries to assist them in setting up and using their BCH.

Collaboration with Partners

10. Environment Canada has confirmed US\$420,000 collaboration with the BCH project to assist 14 countries in the South Pacific to set-up a regional BCH for Pacific Island Countries to be hosted by SPREP in Apia, Samoa. A workshop to examine the initial needs of the 14 countries and to identify the best way forward to set-up the regional BCH, will be held in collaboration with Environment Canada, SPREP and the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit in Apia, Samoa 2-5 November 2004.

11. UNITAR, InWEnt and the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Unit are collaborating in developing a training package and methodology for training of the regional experts.

12. The BCH application that is being developed by the United States Geological survey's NBII is almost completed and will be ready for countries to access and use by the beginning of December 2004. This tool is based on Microsoft Access and it has dual-language capability as well as being easy to install and use.

13. The UNEP-GEF BCH team has been in constant contact with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and have collaborated on finalising the terms of reference for the regional experts, as well as, in the development of the module 1 training tool. The other two will also be forwarded to them shortly for their input.

Timeline and Next Steps

14. A workshop for the Pacific Region will be held 2-5 November for the 14 Pacific Island countries to identify and discuss the issues related to their regional BCH.

15. A member of the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Team will attend the first Informal Advisory Committee of the BCH in Montreal 9-10 November 2004.
16. A panel for the selection of the regional experts will meet in Geneva on 9 and 10 December 2004.
17. A consultation of regional experts and scientists, as recommended by the Joint Summary of Chairs from the GEF Council meeting in May 2004, will also be held in Geneva on 13 -14 December 2004.

Annex 1**List of Potentially Eligible Countries for the BCH project approved in March 2004**

ELIGIBLE COUNTRY	DATE OF BECOMING A PARTY TO CPB
Latvia	2/13/04
Belize	2/12/04
Tajikistan	2/12/04
Bangladesh	2/05/04
Grenada	2/05/04
Vietnam	1/21/04
Bahamas	1/15/04
Hungary	1/13/04
Egypt	12/23/2003
Brazil	11/24/2003
Madagascar	11/24/2003
Slovakia	11/24/2003
Iran	11/20/2003
Jordan	11/11/2003
Lithuania	11/7/2003
Turkey	10/24/2003
Ethiopia	10/9/2003
Senegal	10/8/2003
El Salvador	9/26/2003
Tonga	9/18/2003
Cambodia	9/17/2003
Antigua and Barbuda	9/10/2003
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	8/27/2003
South Africa	8/14/2003
Nigeria	7/15/2003
Romania	6/30/2003
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	6/29/2003
Mongolia	6/22/2003
Palau	6/13/2003
Ukraine	12/6/2003
Ghana	5/30/2003
Tanzania, United Republic of	4/24/2003
Burkina Faso	8/4/2003
Moldova, Republic of	3/4/2003
Ecuador	1/30/2003
Marshall Islands	1/27/2003
Tunisia	1/22/2003
Slovenia	11/20/2002
Botswana	6/11/2002
Mauritius	4/11/2002
Mozambique	10/21/2002
Croatia	8/29/2002
Mali	8/28/2002
Nicaragua	8/28/2002
Belarus	8/26/2002
Bhutan	8/26/2002
Niue	7/8/2002
Djibouti	4/8/2002

Barbados	9/6/2002
Samoa	5/30/2002
Venezuela	5/13/2002
Bolivia	4/22/2002
Liberia	2/15/2002
Maldives	9/2/2002
Panama	5/1/2002
Nauru	11/12/2001
Lesotho	9/20/2001
Czech Republic	10/8/2001
Saint Kitts and Nevis	5/23/2001
Fiji	6/5/2001
Trinidad and Tobago	10/5/2000