



United Nations  
Environment Programme

## UNEP-GEF Project on

## Development of National Biosafety Frameworks



Global Environment  
Facility

### **Biosafety Newsletter # 2 – May 2002**

*Dear Friends and Colleagues,*

*This is the second newsletter of the UNEP-GEF Global Project on the “Development of National Biosafety Frameworks”. This edition of the newsletter provides a progress report on the global Project, regional updates on countries participating in the Project and a summary of the first series of regional workshops. We also give a summary of the second module of the toolkit that we are preparing to assist countries in carrying out their national projects. In addition, the Project web site provides further information on the Project.*

*We encourage you to help us in disseminating this newsletter, and to write us for any further information you may require on the Project. We hope that in future this newsletter will become a way to disseminate information on important events in biosafety, and we would appreciate receiving relevant information, particularly on capacity building activities.*

*The Biosafety Team*

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In order to facilitate the dissemination of this newsletter we are sending it in a simple text form as well as a PDF format. To read PDF documents you will need the Acrobat Reader, which is available free on the Internet at the following web address: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>.

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#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The UNEP-GEF global project on the “Development of National Biosafety Frameworks” started in June 2001. Using a country-driven process, the global project has been designed to help up to 100 participating countries to set up their national framework for the management of living modified organisms (LMOs), allowing them to meet the requirements of the Cartagena Protocol.

#### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

In order to participate in the Project, countries have to meet the following eligibility criteria:

##### **The country**

- ✓ Must be a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- ✓ Must be a signatory to Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, or intend to ratify the Protocol not later than completion of their UNEP-GEF project;
- ✓ Must be eligible for GEF support;

- ✓ Must not have received assistance from other GEF funded biosafety projects (e.g. the UNEP-GEF Pilot Project);
- ✓ Must have the National GEF Focal Point formally express the country's interest in participating in the Project.

#### **HOW TO JOIN?**

To join the UNEP-GEF Project on Development of National Biosafety Frameworks, an eligible country has to express its interest in participating through a letter from the national GEF focal point to UNEP. In case of countries that have not yet ratified the Cartagena Protocol, an official letter is needed that complies with the GEF Council decision of September 24. The letter must be addressed to both the GEF and CBD secretariats, and provide written assurance of the intention of the country to become a Party to the Protocol no later than when it has completed the national activities foreseen in the project and that concrete steps have been initiated for this purpose.

## NATIONAL UPDATES

According to the GEF rules, 129 countries are presently potentially eligible to participate in the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Project. These can be divided into four different regions: 42 in Africa, 38 in Asia-Pacific, 20 in Central and Eastern Europe and 29 in Latin America and Caribbean.

Of these 129 countries, 59 signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and 10 have accessed or ratified the Protocol. Of the remaining 60, 25 have now provided written assurance to the GEF and CBD Secretariats of their intention to ratify the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on completing their UNEP/GEF project (see the section on eligibility criteria).

As of 31st May 2002, 93 eligible countries have expressed, through their GEF focal points, their interest in participating in the UNEP-GEF Biosafety Project. The Table at the end of this newsletter gives a country-by-country up-date on the current status.

## REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

A first round of regional workshops on improving understanding of the issues involved in developing national biosafety frameworks amongst countries in the regions was completed in May 2002. These four workshops were held in cooperation with the CBD Secretariat, which held back-to-back workshops on the Biosafety Clearing House. They were targeted at National Project Coordinators (NPC) of participating countries or potential NPCs of countries yet to come on board. The details of these workshops are as follows:

### **Africa:**

16-19 January, Kenya  
(60 participants from 35 countries)

### **Central and Eastern Europe and CIS**

5-9 February, Slovakia  
(83 participants from 24 countries)

### **Asia – Pacific:**

4-8 March, China  
(97 participants from 40 countries)

### **Latin America and the Caribbean:**

8-10 May, Argentina  
(58 participants from 30 countries)

A synthesis report which includes the main conclusions and recommendations from these regional workshops, as well the lessons and best practices resulting from the discussions by participants will be prepared during June and distributed with the next edition of this newsletter.

## NBF DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

The Biosafety Team is also preparing a modular toolkit that provides a practical “how-to” guide for countries to develop their NBF. The toolkit is being prepared in a flexible manner tailored to meet the diverse needs of different countries, and allows countries to select those tools and ideas that are most useful to them.

The toolkit is divided into four modules, each addressing one of the phases listed in the national project document:

- Phase 0 - the vision (or rationale) of the project design, its guiding principles, and the establishment of institutional and management structures.
- Phase 1 - the surveys and inventories of different areas related to biosafety and biotechnology within the country, including entering this information into national databases.
- Phase 2 - the identification of stakeholders, and the consultation, analysis, and training activities needed to identify the priorities and parameters for the drafting of the National Biosafety Framework (NBF).
- Phase 3 - the drafting of the NBF including consultation with stakeholders for their endorsement.

The modules for Phase 0 and Phase 1 have been distributed to participating countries, and are also available on the Project web site. Translations of these modules in French, Spanish and Russian will be distributed to the appropriate countries in the next few weeks.

## COORDINATION OF INFORMATION ON BIOSAFETY CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

The UNEP-GEF project has established initial contacts with bilateral donors and other international stakeholders on biosafety capacity building activities to ensure an easy flow of information, and early identification of opportunities for collaboration. A matrix on

capacity building in biosafety has been developed from the Cuba "Action Plan" for capacity building.

This matrix has now been sent out to all potential donors, and 9 countries have responded to date. The Project Team presented a chart summarizing these activities at a side-event of the ICCP3 on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2002. We hope to receive further contributions from bilateral donors as a result of this presentation.

The matrix will also be sent to IGOs, NGOs and industry, so that we can prepare a comprehensive overview of capacity building activities in biosafety.

### ICCP-3

The members of the UNEP/GEF Biosafety project team attended ICCP-3 at the Hague from 22-26 April, 2002. The team presented a progress report on the GEF/UNEP NBF Development Project at a side-event on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Over 100 delegates from participating countries, donors, international organizations and NGOs attended the meeting, which was chaired by a representative from the GEF. Reports on the status of 12 demonstration projects for the implementation of NBF were given by the three implementing agencies - UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank.

A session on the demonstration projects for the implementation of NBFs was also held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April at the request of CEE countries. During this event, the GEFSEC clarified that only a limited number of projects were funded in order to gain experience, and to identify best practices. Enlargement to other countries will have to be discussed at the GEF Council, most probably in October.

The ICCP-3 meeting also provided the UNEP/GEF team with a unique opportunity to meet with delegates from countries either participating in the project, or those that are considering their participation.

### TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Based on the results of the first round of awareness raising workshops at the regional level, the UNEP-GEF Biosafety project is planning two further rounds of training workshops. These workshops are due to commence in the second half of 2002 and will

focus on building capacity in participating countries on key issues related to the development of National Biosafety Frameworks such as risk assessment and management, public participation, as well as administrative and regulatory systems.

The results of the four regional workshops indicated that countries preferred regional meetings that promote networking within regions, and between sub-regions. In this way, the project will be able to meet the special needs of specific groups, as well as supporting more participants from participating countries.

The training workshops will be carried out in the following six groups:

- ✓ Francophone Africa
- ✓ Anglophone Africa
- ✓ Asia Region
- ✓ Latin America
- ✓ Small Island Developing States
- ✓ C&EE Region

The project will only be able to cover the costs of attendance at these workshops for nominees from countries participating in the GEF/UNEP NBF Development Project. Other countries from the Regions may be able to attend the workshops, provided that they meet their own costs for participation.

### IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

Based on the recommendations of the GEF Strategy on Biosafety, the GEF Council in November 2001 approved 8 demonstration medium size project proposals, presented by UNEP. The participating countries are: Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Poland, and Uganda. Each country already has a National Biosafety Framework and is preparing to implement them fully. These projects are due to start shortly and will work in close cooperation with the UNEP-GEF project on development of NBF. The experience gained from these projects will provide a solid foundation for future capacity building initiatives in biosafety.

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## UNEP-GEF Project on

# Development of National Biosafety Frameworks



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Africa	Asia – Pacific	Central and Eastern Europe	Latin America and Caribbean
Central African Republic <sup>a</sup> Djibouti <sup>a</sup> Mali <sup>a</sup> Rwanda <sup>a</sup> Seychelles <sup>a</sup> Swaziland <sup>a</sup> Tanzania <sup>a</sup> Zimbabwe <sup>a</sup>	Bangladesh <sup>a</sup> Cook Islands <sup>a</sup> Fiji <sup>a</sup> Islamic Republic of Iran <sup>a</sup> Kiribati <sup>a</sup> Kyrgyz Republic <sup>a</sup> Lebanon <sup>a</sup> Republic of Marshall Islands <sup>a</sup> Federated States of Micronesia <sup>a</sup> Mongolia Myanmar <sup>a</sup> Nauru <sup>a</sup> Niue <sup>a</sup> Papua New Guinea <sup>a</sup> Philippines <sup>a</sup> Solomon Islands <sup>a</sup> Syrian Arab Republic <sup>a</sup> Vanuatu <sup>a</sup>	Albania <sup>a</sup> Belarus <sup>a</sup> Croatia <sup>a</sup> Lithuania <sup>a</sup> The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia <sup>a</sup> Romania <sup>a</sup> Slovenia <sup>a</sup> Ukraine <sup>a</sup>	Chile <sup>a</sup> Dominican Republic <sup>a</sup> Ecuador <sup>a</sup> Grenada <sup>a</sup> Haiti <sup>a</sup> Panama <sup>a</sup> Peru <sup>a</sup> Paraguay <sup>a</sup> Peru <sup>a</sup> Saint Kitts and Nevis <sup>a</sup> Trinidad and Tobago <sup>a</sup> Uruguay <sup>a</sup> Venezuela <sup>a</sup>
.....	.....	.....	.....
Benin <sup>b</sup> Botswana <sup>b</sup> Congo <sup>b</sup> Côte d'Ivoire <sup>b</sup> Ghana <sup>b</sup> Guinea <sup>b</sup> Ethiopia <sup>b</sup> Liberia <sup>b</sup> Madagascar <sup>b</sup> Mozambique <sup>b</sup>	Indonesia <sup>b</sup> Kazakhstan <sup>b</sup> Lao, PDR <sup>b</sup> Nepal <sup>b</sup> Samoa <sup>b</sup> Sri Lanka <sup>b</sup> Tajikistan <sup>b</sup> Tonga <sup>b</sup>	Armenia <sup>b</sup> Georgia <sup>b</sup> Republic of Moldova <sup>b</sup> Slovakia <sup>b</sup> Turkey <sup>b</sup>	Costa Rica <sup>b</sup> El Salvador <sup>b</sup> Guatemala <sup>b</sup> Honduras <sup>b</sup> Jamaica <sup>b</sup> Nicaragua <sup>b</sup>
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Algeria <sup>c</sup> Burkina Faso <sup>c</sup> Gambia <sup>c</sup> Lesotho <sup>c</sup> Niger <sup>c</sup> Nigeria <sup>c</sup> Senegal <sup>c</sup> Togo <sup>c</sup>	Jordan <sup>c</sup> Korea, DPR <sup>c</sup> Republic of Korea <sup>c</sup> Palau <sup>c</sup> Viet Nam <sup>c</sup>	Czech Republic <sup>c</sup> Estonia <sup>c</sup>	Antigua and Barbuda <sup>c</sup> Argentina <sup>c</sup> Bahamas <sup>c</sup>

**Note:**

- Group a Participating countries currently drafting their NPD
- Group b Participating countries currently negotiating their NPD with the UNEP-GEF team
- Group c Participating countries beginning their projects.