Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing House of the Cartagena Protocol

**Fast Facts**

Achieved: Helped countries with capacity, expertise and equipment so they could participate in the Cartagena Protocol’s Biosafety Clearing-House.

Where: Global

Cost: GEF funds: $13.25 million; Co-financing: $1.404 million

When: March 2004 to September 2009

Partners: 112 countries participated

**Achievements**

The project provided training, computer help and technical advice to 112 developing countries so they could increase their participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House. The clearing-house is a mechanism set up by the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to facilitate an international exchange of information on living modified organisms. The clearing-house is aimed at helping countries participating in the protocol to comply with its rules governing the international transfer and use of these organisms.

**Legacy**

The work of the project continues in:

- A region-based advisor system of 45 advisors around the world who provide IT and biosafety training.
- A comprehensive training package, lauded by an independent evaluation, that includes interactive modules, case studies on diverse biosafety topics and hands-on exercises for managing data.
- Advancing biosafety agendas around the world. Examples include the approval of a law on living modified organisms in Mongolia, the addition of biosafety topics based on project materials in academic curriculum in Albania, project-developed training modules that were used to design a new biosafety project in Guatemala.
- Decisions made by the countries that participated in the project to better report on living modified organisms’ movements and uses as required by the protocol.
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What People Say:

*The BCH project stands out as a well-planned initiative that incorporated good design practices.* - from an independent evaluation that gave the project highly satisfactory ratings in five categories including effectiveness, and preparation and readiness

Publications:


Outputs and Deliverables:

- Raised awareness of the Cartagena Protocol at the country level.
- Developed an extensive package of training materials.
- Trained a core group of 45 regional advisors who trained others.
- Conducted workshops at global, regional, and country levels.
- Provided Internet access to national data on living modified organisms.
- Provided computers and software necessary to use the clearing-house databases.
- Trained people to use computers, software and to navigate the databases.
- Enhanced the international exchange between biosafety personnel so partners could share experience and knowledge.
- Set up an informal international network of peer-to-peer support.

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Photo Credit: Mongolia by Lawrence Hislop/ UNEP/Grid-Arendal; Farms in the Brazilian Amazon by Riccardo Pravettoni/ UNEP/Grid-Arendal