



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
AMBASSADE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DES PHILIPPINES
OTTAWA, CANADA

L-71-2016

31 May 2016

Excellency:

This pertains to CBD Secretariat on the decision BS-VII4 requiring Parties to submit any information, tools, practical experience and guidance related to existing mechanisms and requirements regarding the contained use of living modified organisms (LMOs), including any specific requirement relating to the type and level of containment.

Enclosed is a letter response signed by the Honorable Secretary Mario G. Montejo, Department of Science and Technology and Chairperson, National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines.

With my good wishes.


PETRONILA P. GARCIA
Ambassador

The Honourable

BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS

Executive Secretary

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

United Nations Environment Programme

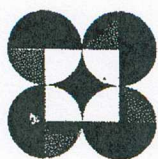
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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

27 April 2016

Hon. BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS

Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques St., Suite 800
Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada

Dear Executive Secretary de Souza Dias:

This pertains to decision BS-VII4, wherein the COP-MOP invited Parties and other Governments were requested to submit to the Secretariat information, tools practical experience and guidance related to their existing mechanisms and requirements regarding the contained use of living modified organisms (LMOs), including any specific requirement relating to the type and level of containment. The information contained in the submissions will assist the Parties, at their eighth meeting, in considering the gaps and needs identified, if any, with the view of facilitating the implementation of the Protocols' provision on contained use of living modified organisms.

In this regard, we would like to inform you that the Philippines is the first country in Asia to establish a regulatory system to address issues and concerns regarding the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) under contained use and those being tested in an open environment. To date, we have assessed and approved 225 applications for contained use and 24 applications for confined tests. Executive Order No. 514 was issued in 2006 as a result of a UNEP-funded project which established the National Biosafety Framework (NBF), which essentially is a description of a regulatory system that was already in existence since 1990. The NBF delineated the responsibilities of the regulatory agencies involved in biosafety decision making process in the Philippines. Just recently, the National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines (NCBP), the body tasked to formulate policies on biosafety, issued Joint Administrative Circular No. 1, Series of 2016 on the "Rules and Regulations for the Research and Development, Handling and Use, Transboundary Movement, Release into the Environment and Management of Genetically Modified Plant and Plant Products Derived from the Use of Modern of Biotechnology". The Circular covers all activities under contained use, field testing, commercial propagation and use of LMOs for food, feed and processing. Among the key features of this issuance is the implementation of biosafety regulation of LMOs by the five key Departments, enhanced public participation in the decision making process, full blown environmental risk and health impact assessment by the Environment and Health Departments, respectively.

It may be noted that aside from our (Philippines) vast experience in dealing with LMOs, majority of national reports provided by the Parties to the Secretariat have indicated that they already have firmly established regulations for the contain use of LMOs. A search of the National Laws, Regulations and Guidelines on the Biosafety Clearing-House indicates that at least 151 countries (146 Parties and five other Governments) have legislation in place in implementing the contained use provision for LMOs.

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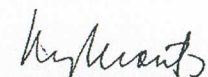
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The biosafety protocol for contained use is a well-established discipline in existence for more than 30 years. Therefore, separate guidance for LMOs under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is not warranted, and in fact, may create conflicting requirements with respect to national regulations already in place. Additionally, there are extensive international, regional and national guidance and regulations on containment requirements for the handling, transport, packaging and identification of biological organisms under contained use, including LMOs. It is therefore important for Parties and other Governments to share their existing mechanisms and requirements regarding the contained use of LMOs with the Secretariat to demonstrate the breadth of information already available and in use in relation to contained use of LMOs.

For your information and consideration.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



MARIO G. MONTEJO

Secretary

Department of Science and Technology

and Chairperson, National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines

Cc.: Assistant Secretary JESUS RS. DOMINGO
UNIO - DFA



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

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14 January 2016

NOTIFICATION

Submission of information requested in decision on Contained Use (Article 6)

Dear Madam/Sir,

In accordance with operational objective 1.8 of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP) decided to include an item on the contained use of living modified organisms within the context of Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Protocol for deliberations at its seventh meeting.

In decision BS-VII/4, the COP-MOP invited Parties and other Governments to submit to the Executive Secretary information, tools, practical experience and guidance related to their existing mechanisms and requirements regarding the contained use of living modified organisms, including any specific requirement relating to the type and level of containment.

The information contained in the submissions will assist Parties, at their eighth meeting, in considering the gaps and needs identified, if any, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Protocol's provisions on contained use of living modified organisms.

Accordingly, I would kindly invite you to submit to the Secretariat any currently available information on the aforementioned topics as soon as possible, but no later than **30 April 2016**. Submissions can be made online through the Biosafety Clearing-House at <http://bch.cbd.int/managementcentre/edit/submission.shtml> or via e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for 2016 and reiterate my appreciation for your continued support towards the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary

To: Cartagena Protocol National Focal Points
Biosafety Clearing-House National Focal Points
CBD National Focal Points (where CPB focal points have not yet been designated)



Convention on
Biological Diversity

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