

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE AHTEG ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT ON 24 APRIL 2009, CBD SECRETARIAT, MONTREAL, CANADA

Present: Helmut Gaugitsch – AHTEG Chair
Vilasini Pillai – AHTEG Rapporteur
Hans Bergmans – Chair of the Sub-working Group on the Roadmap
Eliana Fontes – Chair of the Sub-working Group on LM mosquitoes
Kazuo Watanabe – Chair of the Sub-working Group on Abiotic Stress
Manoela Miranda – Bureau Secretary

In Attendance: Charles Gbedemah – CBD Secretariat
Giovanni Ferraiolo – CBD Secretariat

Excused: Beatrix Tappeser – Chair of the Sub-working Group on Stacked Genes

Main agenda item: Roles and responsibilities of the Core-group (Parties), non-Parties, Observers and additional experts in the sub-working groups.

1. In introducing the item for this meeting, Mr. Helmut Gaugitsch reiterated that the Sub-working Groups comprise experts from the Core-group (Parties), non-Parties and Observers. He further noted that “invited experts” may provide input to the Sub-working Groups. However, he reminded the Bureau that the Core-group, which is made up of Parties, has the overall responsibility of the Sub-working Groups to deliver the outputs and that the Bureau must therefore ensure that due process is followed to ensure the credibility of the process as a Party driven one.
2. Reinforcing the position of the Chair, Mr. Charles Gbedemah emphasized that the AHTEG and its Sub-working Groups are a multi-stakeholder process that is led by the Parties.
3. It was agreed that invitations to experts outside the AHTEG must come from one of the Chairs of the Sub-working Groups and be communicated via email (riskassessment.forum@cbd.int) to the Secretariat. Invited experts must first be registered to the Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management and may be nominated either by governments or organizations. All experts have to fill out the common format for the nomination of Biosafety Experts.
4. The Chairs of the Sub-working Groups were encouraged to invite those experts in the Online Forum who have offered assistance to the work of the AHTEG to provide input to the work of the Sub-working Groups. The annex to document UNEP/CBD/BS/AHTEG-RA&RM/1/2 lists the names of these experts and areas in which they expressed their availability.
5. It was further agreed that the AHTEG Bureau member who invites an expert will have to introduce the invited expert via e-mail to the rest of the AHTEG after the due registration process with the Secretariat.
6. Mr. Giovanni Ferraiolo suggested the creation of an “AHTEG Portal” in the Biosafety-Clearing House (BCH) with restricted access to the AHTEG participants and invited experts.
7. The AHTEG Bureau agreed that the following discussion groups be created under the AHTEG Portal: one discussion group for general AHTEG issues, four discussion groups on the specific topics (i.e. one discussion group for each sub-working group) and one AHTEG Bureau discussion group. The former five discussion groups (i.e. one for AHTEG general issues and four for the Sub-working Groups) will be accessible to all AHTEG participants and invited experts. The latter discussion group (i.e. AHTEG Bureau) will be restricted to the members of the AHTEG Bureau. The Bureau further agreed that six mailing lists (Listservers) will be created, one for each discussion group, to allow emails to be sent automatically to the relevant experts when a new message is posted in the discussion group.
8. A teleconference among AHTEG Bureau members was tentatively scheduled to take place at the end of June. The exact date and agenda will be communicated by the AHTEG Chair in due time.