



## Role of the Biosafety Clearing-House in Facilitating the Implementation of the Identification and Documentation Requirements

Kathryn Garforth, Legal Officer  
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological  
Diversity

### Introduction

- The Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) is established in Article 20 of the Protocol
- Parties to the Protocol are required to share certain types of information and decisions via the BCH
  - E.g. decisions on LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment; decisions on domestic use of LMOs that may be subject to transboundary movement for direct use as food or feed, or for processing.
- BCH is free and available to everyone
- BCH can be accessed at: <http://bch.cbd.int>

# BCH and Customs Officers

- Most common types of information that customs officers are likely to need to find in the BCH are:
  - Contact information for national authorities
  - National decisions on whether or not the import of specific LMOs is allowed

## Home Page of the BCH: <http://bch.cbd.int>

The screenshot shows the home page of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) Central Portal. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, The BCH, The Protocol, Finding Information, Registering Information, Resources, and Help. A search bar and a dropdown menu for Country Profiles are also present. The main content area is titled "Welcome to the BCH Central Portal" and provides an overview of the portal's purpose. It includes sections for "Latest news", "Latest Additions", and "Latest updates". On the right side, there are several featured articles and reports, including "Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management", "Second National Report on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol", "Biosafety Awareness Survey", "BCH on BCH focal points forum", and "Online Portal Socio-economic Considerations". At the bottom, there are social media links for RSS, BCH, Cartagena Protocol, Twitter, and Facebook.

The main page of the Finding Information section contains a welcome message and a list of the information available which is divided into two groups.

The left-hand group lists categories of National Records. This information is submitted by Governments as mandated by Article 20 of the Protocol.

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**National Records**

**National Contacts**  
Follow this link to search for: (i) National Focal Points, (ii) Competent National Authorities and (iii) National Biosafety Websites and Databases

**Laws and Regulations**  
Follow this link to search for: (i) National Laws, Regulations and (ii) Guidelines and Bilateral, Regional and Multilateral Agreements

**Country's Decisions and other Communications**  
Follow this link to search for: (i) Decisions on LMOs under Advance Informed Agreement; (ii) Decisions on LMOs for food, for feed or for processing under Article 11; (iii) Other decisions & declarations; (iv) Risk Assessment Reports

**Roster of Experts**  
Follow this link to access a database of experts in biosafety, searchable using various fields.

**Reference Records**

**LMOs, Genes or Organisms**  
Follow this link to search for: (i) the LMO-UID Registry; (ii) Gene Registry and (iii) Organism Registry

**Capacity-Building**  
Follow this link to search for: (i) Biosafety Capacity Building Projects; (ii) Capacity-Building Opportunities; (iii) Compendium of Academically-Accredited Biosafety Courses; and (iv) Capacity-Building Needs and Priorities

**Directory of International Organizations involved in Biosafety Activities**  
Follow this link to access information about international organizations involved in activities relevant to implementation of the Biosafety Protocol with summaries of their activities and contact information.

**Biosafety Information Resource Centre**  
Follow this link to access electronic catalogues of biosafety-

**Compiled Information**

National Contacts  
LMO Registry  
Organism Registry  
Gene Registry

**Go to record ID**

The right-hand group lists categories of Reference Records.

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Both groups of information also appear in the left-hand menu.  
To access a searchable database of interest, click on the link either on the Main page or in the left-hand menu.

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By clicking on a category of information underneath the Compiled Information heading, you will access a listing of information rather than a searchable database.

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If you know the ID number of a BCH record, you can directly access it by entering the number here and clicking on the 'Go' button.

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If you click on a link, either on the Main page or in the left-hand menu, you will go to the relevant search page.  
Let's use the "National Contacts" database as an example.

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## Search for National Contacts

On this page you can search for (i) **Cartagena Protocol National Focal Points** who are responsible for managing communication between the CBD Secretariat and their respective governments; (ii) **BCH National Focal points** who are responsible for coordinating with the CBD Secretariat regarding the development and implementation of the BCH; (iii) **Emergency Points of contact** for the purposes of receiving notifications under **Article 12 of the Cartagena Protocol**; (iv) **Competent National Authorities** who are designated and authorized by governments to be responsible for performing the administrative functions required by **Article 19 of the Cartagena Protocol**; and (v) **National Biosafety Websites and Databases**.

From the page **National Contacts** it is also possible to download lists of contacts in PDF format.

Choose fields as needed to narrow search results. If no category is selected to narrow the search for a particular field, a default value of "all" will be used.

**Geographical areas**

Select a country

Select country group (optional)

**Type of National Contact**

**Date of record**

**Keyword search**  
 Enter keywords. Separate words with AND or OR.

This page provides some fields to define a search. You may use one or more fields. However, the more fields you use, the more specific the search result will be.

The screenshot shows the 'Search for National Contacts' page. The left sidebar contains navigation menus for 'Finding Information' and 'Compiled Information'. The main content area includes a search form with fields for 'Geographical areas', 'Type of National Contact', 'Date of record', and 'Keyword search'. A 'Search now' button is located at the top right of the search form. At the bottom of the search form, there is a 'Browse all records' button, which is circled in orange. Below the screenshot, a green text box contains the following instruction:

If you wish to access all of the records in the database, click on the 'Browse all records' button at the bottom of the search page.

The screenshot shows the 'Search for National Contacts' page with search criteria entered. The 'Geographical areas' field is set to '- Biosafety Clearing-House Focal Point'. Two 'Search now' buttons are circled in orange: one at the top right of the search form and one at the bottom right of the search form. Below the screenshot, a green text box contains the following instruction:

Otherwise, when you have selected your search criteria, click on one of the "Search now" buttons that appear both at the top and at the bottom of the search page.

The screenshot shows the 'Search for National Contacts' page. The 'Geographical areas' dropdown menu is open, displaying a list of countries including Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, and Barbados. A red hand icon points to the blue arrow on the right side of the dropdown menu.

On the search pages, most fields contain pre-defined terms, or “controlled vocabulary”, to narrow your search. To access this “controlled vocabulary”, click on one of the blue arrows and a drop-down menu will appear from which you can select from a choice of terms.

The screenshot shows the 'Search for National Contacts' page. The 'Keyword search' field is highlighted with a red oval and contains the text 'Ministry of Environment'. The 'Search Now' button is visible at the bottom right of the search form.

Other fields, such as “Keyword search”, do not contain “controlled vocabulary” and allow you to directly type the information you wish to search for.

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- Advanced Search --

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From the page [National Contacts](#) it is also possible to download lists of contacts in PDF format.

Choose fields as needed to narrow search results. If no category is selected to narrow the search for a particular field, a default value of "all" will be used.

Select country

India

Geographical areas

<Any>

Type of National Contact

All Competent National Authorities (AIA, A11, Contuse, Handling)

Date of record

<All>

Example: Search for Indian Competent National Authorities

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## Search results

Group records by: 
Results per page:

Sort records by: 
[Export results to CSV file](#)
[Show on map](#)

ID	Description
1 record(s) found	
<b>India</b> 7228	Competent National Authority <a href="#">Ministry of Environment and Forests</a>

Result: one record found

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## Competent National Authority

**Record information and status**

Record ID	7228
Status	Published
Date of creation	2005-01-06 13:03 UTC ( <a href="mailto:andrew.bowers@cbd.int">andrew.bowers@cbd.int</a> )
Date of last update	2009-08-27 19:13 UTC ( <a href="mailto:giovanni.ferraiolo@cbd.int">giovanni.ferraiolo@cbd.int</a> )
Owner	<a href="mailto:warriner@nic.in/287">warriner@nic.in/287</a>

**General information**

**Country**

- India

**Name of the Competent National Authority**

Ministry of Environment and Forests

**Website**

[Ministry of Environment and Forests](http://www.mef.gov.in)

**Record details**

## Record details (cont.)

**Coordinates**

**Coordinates**

**Ministry of Environment and Forests**  
 Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road  
 New Delhi  
 India, 110003  
 Phone: +91 11 2436 1896, +91 11 2436 0721  
 Email: [secy@menf.delhi.nic.in](mailto:secy@menf.delhi.nic.in)  
 Url: [Ministry of Environment and Forests](http://www.mef.gov.in)

**Regulatory function**

**Administrative functions**

- All functions pursuant to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- All functions pursuant to Rules 1989.

**Types of LMOs under its jurisdiction**

- Animals
- Bacteria
- Plants
- animal pathogens and plant pests

Record details (cont.)

**Additional contact information**

**Contact person**

**Mr. Desh Deepak Verma** [Record #44744](#)  
Joint Secretary  
Conservation and Survey  
Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF)  
Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,  
New Delhi  
India, 110003  
Tel: +91 11 24361613  
Fax: +91 11 24361613  
Email: [ddverma@nic.in](mailto:ddverma@nic.in)

**Dr. Prodipto Ghosh** [Record #100518](#)  
Secretary  
Ministry of Environment & Forests  
Government of India  
Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road  
New Delhi  
India, 110003  
Phone: +91 11 2436 1896, +91 11 2436 0721  
Email: [sgcy@menf.delhi.nic.in](mailto:sgcy@menf.delhi.nic.in)  
Url: [Ministry of Environment and Forests](http://Ministry of Environment and Forests)

**Additional Information**

**Other relevant website address or documents**

- [Genetical Engineering approval Committee](#)
- [Capacity Building on Biosafety](#)

**Records referencing this document (1)**

ID	Description
1	record(s) found

1 record(s) found

ID	Description	Count
	Law, Regulation or Guideline	1 record

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**Searching for countries' decisions' LMOs**

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## Search for Country's Decisions and other Communications

On this page you can search for Decisions and other Communications about: (i) Decisions on LMOs under the **Advance Informed Agreement (AIA)**, which applies to the first intentional transboundary movement of LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment of the Party of import; (ii) Decisions on LMOs **for food, for feed or for processing** under **Article 11** of the Cartagena Protocol regarding the requirement that countries exchange information at an early stage through the BCH; (iii) **Other decisions & declarations**; and (iv) **Risk Assessment Reports** carried out to evaluate the potential adverse effects of LMOs on biodiversity and human health.

Choose fields as needed to narrow search results. If no category is selected to narrow the search for a particular field, a default value of "All" will be used.

Select a country: **Philippines**

Geographical areas: Select region: <Any>

Type of decision, declaration, notification or report: <All>  
 Decision on Contained use of LMOs (Article 6.2)  
 Decision on LMOs for direct use as food or feed, or for processing  
 - Decision on domestic use of an LMO, including its placing on the market  
 - Decision on import of LMOs  
 Decision on LMOs for intentional introduction into the environment  
 - Decision taken in accordance with the Advance Informed Agreement  
 - Decision taken in accordance with your domestic regulatory framework  
 Please use Control-key to select multiple values

Type of living modified organisms: <All>

Date of record: <All>

Keyword search: Enter keywords. Separate words with AND or OR.

**Example: Searching for decisions by the Philippines**

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## Search results

Group records by: [ ] Results per page: 25  
 Sort records by: [ ] [Export results to CSV file](#)  
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ID	Description	Accession Number	Organism	Actions
46634	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-00603-6	Corn	[Icons]
46635	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-0010-6	Corn	[Icons]
46636	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	SYN-BT011-1	Corn	[Icons]
46694	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-00531-6	Corn	[Icons]
46696	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-00603-6	Corn	[Icons]
46713	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	SYN-BT011-1	Corn	[Icons]
46714	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	SYN-BT011-1	Corn	[Icons]

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ID	Description	MON-00603-6 x MON-00810-6
46634	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46635	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46636	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46694	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46696	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46713	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46714	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46715	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn
46716	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Canola plant, Canola, Rapeseed
46717	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	Corn

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Welcome to the BCH Central Portal

The Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) is a mechanism set up by the [Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#) to facilitate the exchange of information on Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) and assist the Parties to better comply with their obligations under the Protocol. Global access to a variety of scientific, technical, environmental, legal and capacity building information is provided in all 6 of the UN languages.

BCH account holders can create and manage records in the BCH by signing in through the [Management Centre](#) (Registering Information) section.

**Latest news**

2011-10-20 [Nigeria - REPORT OF THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING HOUSE \(BCH\) TRAINING WORKSHOP HELD AT THE BIO-INFORMATICS CENTRE \(BIC\), NATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY \(NABDA\), LUGBE - ABUJA, 18 - 19 JULY, 2011...](#)

2011-10-20 [Nigeria - REPORT OF NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS ON THE 2ND NIGERIA NATIONAL BIOSAFETY REPORT, HELD ON THE 9TH-11TH AUGUST 2011 AND 2ND-24TH AUGUST 2011...](#)

2011-10-10 [Benin - Deuxième Atelier de formation sur l'application du Centre d'Echange sur la Prévention des Risques Biotechnologiques dans le cadre du projet FEM-PNUE-BCHII...](#)

2011-10-07 [Benin - Avis N°1066/MEH/JC/S/GN/OS/FRN/SPN/BioSecurM/SP du 06/10/2011 d'appel à manifestation d'intérêt pour l'équipement de la Coordination Nationale PRB-UEMOA-BFNIN...](#)

2011-10-06 [Honduras - 1er Taller Nacional CIIBB II...](#)

[More news...](#)

**Latest Additions** [\[More additions...\]](#)

2011-11-07 [Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline](#)

**Latest updates**

2011-11-08 [Angola - Second Regular National Report on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#)

2011-11-07 [Arachstan - Second Regular National Report on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety](#)

2011-07-19 [Lithuania - Competent National Authority](#)

2011-06-21 [Viet Nam - Competent National Authority](#)

2011-06-17 [Lithuania - Competent National Authority](#)

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**Biosafety Awareness Survey**

**BCH ON BIODIVERSITY**  
focal points' forum

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Use the "Country Profiles" menu to see all the information submitted by Malaysia to the BCH

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## Country Profile

**Profile information and status**

Country	Malaysia
Date of signature	2000-05-24
Date of ratification	2003-09-03
Date of entry into force	2003-12-02
Profile revision	-
Profile status	Published
Profile last updated on	-

**Type of document**

Type of document	Number of records	Date of last update
Biosafety Expert	2	2011-10-04 04:19 UTC
Capacity Building Needs and Priorities	1	2011-04-29 03:03 UTC
Competent National Authority	2	2010-12-15 00:55 UTC
Country's Decision or any other Communication	1	2010-12-14 12:06 UTC
Law, Regulation or Guideline	5	2011-09-29 08:41 UTC
National Database or Website	1	2009-08-05 04:46 UTC
National Focal Point	3	2011-11-02 23:00 UTC
News	0	-
Report on Assignment	0	-
Risk Assessment	1	2010-12-14 12:00 UTC
Reports on Implementation of the Protocol	2	2011-09-30 09:05 UTC
<b>Total number of records</b>	<b>18</b>	

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**BCH account holders can create and manage records in the BCH by signing in to the BCH Centre.**

**Resources**

- Registration Forms
- Site Map for National Participation
- Training Site of the BCH
- Glossary
- Thesaurus
- Site Map
- Downloadable Files
- Online forums and portals
- Information services
- Mailing Lists

**Latest news**

- 2010-01-18 [The Biosafety Clearing-House is now on Twitter!](#)
- 2009-12-22 [Study of Users and Potential Users of the Biosafety Clearing-House...](#)
- 2009-12-08 [Republic of Korea - Korean scientists produced genetically modified raw materials for nylon...](#)
- 2009-12-08 [Republic of Korea - Korea developed an RSV-resistant rice variety...](#)
- 2009-12-08 [Republic of Korea - Cloned pig produced for use in human transplants...](#)

[More news...](#)

**Latest Additions**

- 2010-01-18 [Capacity Building Project](#)

[More additions...](#)

**BCH User Survey**

Survey: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor

**BCH Tutorial on Registering Information**

English and Spanish versions available

**Open-ended Online Expert Forum on Risk Assessment and Risk Management**

**NEW RELEASES**

- Management Centre
- Common Formats
- FAQs

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- Common Formats
- Solutions for National Participation
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## Online forums and collaborative portals

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## We have created a Collaborative Portal for Customs Officials

### Collaborative Portals

The following collaborative portals are currently on-going. Participation is restricted to group members:

- [COP-MOP Bureau](#)
- [Compliance Committee](#)
- [Capacity-Building Network](#)
- [BCH Informal Advisory Committee \(IAC\)](#)
- [AHTEG on Risk Assessment & Risk Management](#)
- [UNEP-GEF BCH Regional Advisors \(RAs\)](#)
- [University of Malawi & SCBD Joint Practicum on Risk Assessment](#)
- [Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification of Living Modified Organisms \(including the Collaborative Portal for Customs Officials\)](#)

*For further information, please follow the links.*

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Collaborative Portals on Art. 18

- Customs Officials' Portal
- Calendar of events
- Documents & Resource materials
- Archive: Forum on Art. 18.3

## Welcome to the Collaborative Portal for Customs Officials

### Workshops on the Identification and Documentation of LMOS

The Biosafety Unit of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is organizing a number of Training of Trainers' Workshops on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms. News regarding the workshops is below. [Documents and resource materials](#) are also available.

#### Latest News

- **08-09-2011** - The Asia sub-regional Training of Trainers' Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will take place in New Delhi, India, 21-25 November 2011. See the [notification](#) calling for nominations to participate. The deadline for nominations is **14 October 2011**.
- **16-02-2011** - The Central and Eastern European Regional Training of Trainers' Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 11-15 April 2011. See the [notification](#) calling for nominations to participate.
- **10-05-2010** - The report of the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Training of Trainers' Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is now available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- **15-01-2010** - The Biosafety Project of Malaysia is organising a National Workshop on the Identification and Documentation of Living Modified Organisms to be held in Kuala Lumpur, January 25-29.

**Customs Officials' Forum**

For participants from the CEE Training of Trainers Workshop

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