



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 language selector is also present. The main content area is titled "Welcome to the BCH Central Portal" and includes a brief description of the BCH's purpose. Below this, there are sections for "Latest news" and "Latest Additions" with a list of recent updates and reports. On the right side, there are several featured links and banners, 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", and "BCH on BCH focal points' forum". At the bottom, there is a "Follow us" section with social media links for RSS, Twitter, and Facebook.

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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, BUCH NATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (NBDA), 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 22ND-24TH AUGUST 2011.
- 2011-10-10 Benin - Equipement axier de formation sur l'utilisation du Centre d'Echange sur la Prévention des Risques Biotechnologiques dans le cadre du protocole BCH.
- 2011-10-07 Benin - Avis 101106/INM/UC/COM/OPPH (PPH) Bissécure d'AP du 06/10/2011 d'appel à manifestation d'intérêt pour l'équipement de la Coordination Nationale PRB-UPROA-BCH.
- 2011-10-06 Honduras - 1er Taller Nacional CIBB TI...

Latest Additions [More additions...]

- 2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline
- 2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline
- 2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline
- 2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline
- 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 Azerbaijan - Second Regular National Report on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- 2011-07-13 Lithuania - Competent National Authority
- 2011-06-21 Viet Nam - Competent National Authority
- 2011-06-17 Lithuania - Competent National Authority

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

Online Portal Socio-economic Considerations

Follow us: RSS: BCH Cartagena Protocol Twitter: 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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- Gene Registry

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Finding Information

Welcome to the **Finding Information** section of the BCH. Here a wide variety of scientific, technical, environmental, legal and capacity building information can be accessed. The information currently available is organized into two categories: a) **National Records** submitted by Governments as mandated by Article 20 of the Protocol and b) **Reference Records** which are submitted by general BCH users. Included under the Reference records category are three registries regarding LMO information appearing in other BCH records.

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 organisations 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-

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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Go to record ID

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

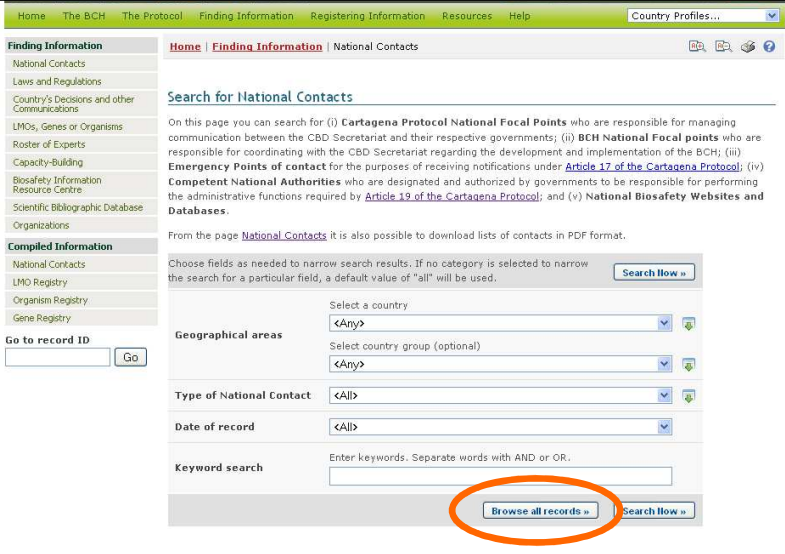
Select country group (optional)

Type of National Contact

Date of record

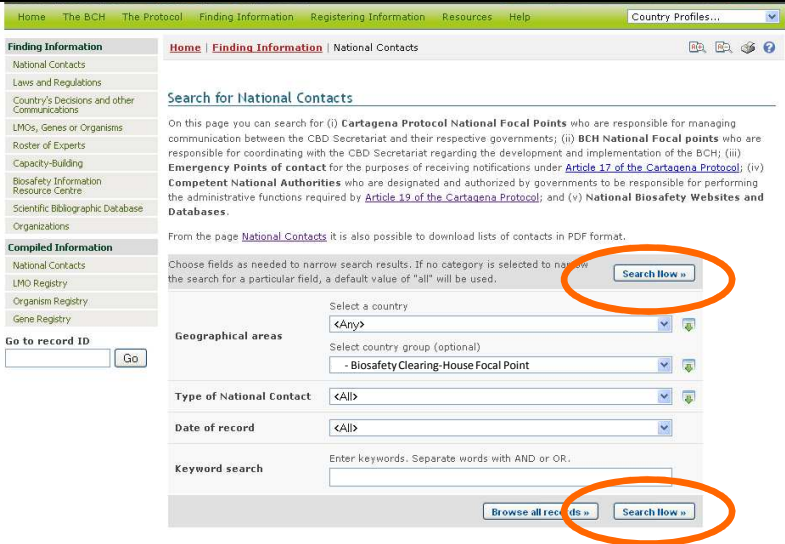
Keyword search

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.



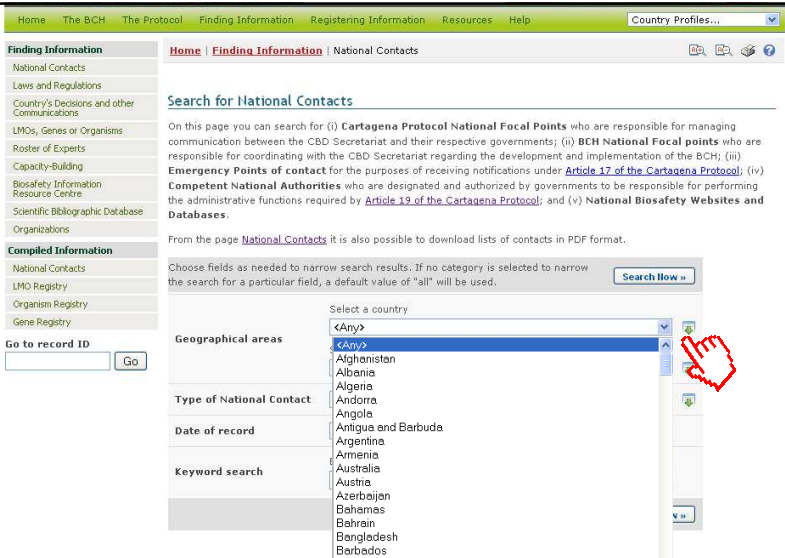
The screenshot shows the 'Search for National Contacts' page. The left sidebar contains navigation links under 'Finding Information' and 'Compiled Information'. The main content area includes a search form with fields for 'Geographical areas', 'Type of National Contact', 'Date of record', and 'Keyword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

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'. The 'Search now' button at the top right of the search form is circled in orange. The 'Browse all records' button at the bottom of the search form is also circled in orange.

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.



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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 a country

Geographical areas <Any> 

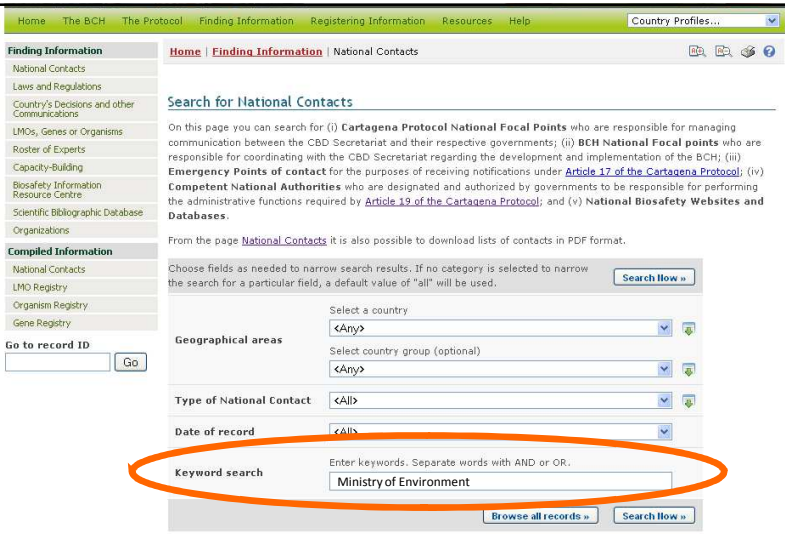
Type of National Contact <Any> 

Date of record <Any> 

Keyword search <Any> 

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.



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
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Select a country

Geographical areas <Any> 

Select country group (optional)

Type of National Contact <Any> 

Date of record <Any> 

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

Ministry of Environment

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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Select country
India

Geographical areas
Select region
<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

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Group records by: Results per page: 25

Sort records by:

[Export results to CSV file](#)
[Show on map](#)

ID	Description
1 record(s) found	
India 7228	Competent National Authority Ministry of Environment and Forests

Result: one record found

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

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: secy@menf.delhi.nic.in
Url: 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	
	<div>Law, Regulation or Guideline</div> <div>1 record</div>

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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.

Geographical areas

Select a country: **Philippines**

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 contained use with the explicit consent of the importing country
- 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](#) [Show on map](#)

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ID	Description	MON-0603-6 x MON-06010-6	
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	SYN-BT011-1 Corn	
46694	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-06031-6	
46696	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	MON-0603-6 x MON-06010-6 Corn	
46713	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	SYN-BT011-1 Corn	
46714	Philippines Approval of the import/use of the LMO(s) without conditions	SYN-BT011-1 x MON-06021-9 Corn	

Search results

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ID	Description	MON-00603-5 x MON-00810-6	MON-00810-6	SYN-BT011-1	MON-00531-6	MON-00603-5 x MON-00810-6	SYN-BT011-1	SYN-BT011-1 x MON-00021-9	REN-00038-3 x MON-00810-6	MON-00073-7	SYN-EV176-9
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										
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									

Search results

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Biosafety Clearing-House Convention on Biological Diversity

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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 II 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 22ND-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-PNUF-BCH II...

2011-10-07 Benin - Avis n°1066/MEH/UDC/SGH/OSFPH/PFN Biosécurité/SP du 06/10/2011 d'appel à manifestation d'intérêt pour l'équipement de la Coordination Nationale PRB-UEMOA-BENIN...

2011-10-06 Honduras - Taller Nacional CIIBB II...

[More news...](#)

Latest Additions [More additions...]

2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline

2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline

2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline

2011-11-07 Burkina Faso - Law, Regulation or Guideline

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 Azerbaijan - 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

Biosafety Awareness Survey

BCH on BIO focal points' forum

Online Portal Socio-economic Considerations

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Resources

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- Solutions for National Participation
- Training Site of the BCH
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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 & UNEP 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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Country Profiles...

Collaborative Portals on Art. 18

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

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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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