A User's Guide to the Central Portal of the Biosafety Clearing-House

"Using the BCH Modules to Meet Stakeholder Needs"

August 2011

Module Outline

1.Introduction to the Module

1.1 Context

UNEP-GEF Projects for Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH), in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity are continuously building a modular training package that aims to provide a practical "how-to" guide for countries to assist them in learning, understanding, using, and setting-up national access to the BCH. The training package is designed to be flexible and is tailored to meet diverse needs of different countries, allowing them to select those tools and ideas that are most useful to their situation, needs and priorities. The training package is divided into four modules, each addressing one element of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH).

1.2 Audience

This module is designed to provide guidance to instructors using the BCH Training Modules to train a variety of different stakeholders.

1.3 Purpose

The BCH Modules comprise a set of cohesive training subunits. The training subunits are selfcontained, which means that different components can be put together in various formats suitable for different target audiences.

Please note that the following curricula are intended as a guide to identify topics of greatest interest only, and should not in any way be interpreted as exclusionary. Subunits should be added or deleted according to the prior experience of participants and the time available for training.

2. Using the BCH Training Modules

> **OVERVIEW**
> The BCH User's Guide is a modular suite of complementary tools that can be combined in different sets according to the training needs and interest of the users

2.1. About the Users's Guide

The **User's Guide to the Central Portal of the Biosafety Clearing-House** has been developed as a part of the UNEP-GEF Project for Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH-I) and updated within UNEP-GEF Project for Continued Enhancement of Capacity Building for Effective Participation in the BCH (BCH-II) to provide a practical "how-to" guide for the different users of the BCH to assist them in using the BCH.

The Guide contains a suite of training tools presented in a modular training package that cover all aspects of using the BCH, including accessing information, registering information, sharing information, and setting-up national access to the BCH. The training package is designed to be flexible and is tailored to meet diverse needs of different countries and stakeholders, allowing them to select those tools and ideas that are most useful to their situation, needs and priorities.

The User's Guide comprises multiple modules (including this one), each addressing a different element of the BCH. Additional tools for trainers are provided in one Appendix to the Guide.

2.2. BCH Users and Stakeholders

The BCH assists Parties to the Protocol and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Protocol. It functions like a central information marketplace, where the producers and users of biosafety information interact and exchange that information in a transparent manner.

The BCH is the key for governments to access information they need to make and share informed decisions regarding the import or release of living modified organisms (LMOs). The BCH contains information that Parties have to provide (such as national contacts, relevant laws and regulations, and decisions on release and import) as well as other information and resources relevant to implementing the Protocol, such as information on capacity-building, access to experts, links to biosafety resources, organizations, academic courses and other information. Governments that are not Party to the Protocol are also encouraged to contribute information to the BCH.

By allowing easy and open access to key information, the BCH fosters greater transparency in the implementation of the Protocol and this facilitates effective participation of the public and civil society groups in the decision-making process.

The BCH also facilitates scientific and technical cooperation between Parties and other relevant stakeholders, for example by allowing interested stakeholders to access or contribute information on existing biosafety capacity building activities in addition to countries registering their capacity building needs and priorities, thus facilitating coordination and synergy between various initiatives. For industry, researchers and other stakeholders the BCH allows easy access to information vital to their activities, including details of the national contacts, relevant legislation and agreements, and the decisions and declarations that govern LMO activities and movements.

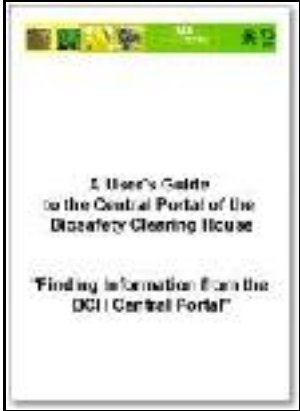### 2.3. *Addressing Different Stakeholders Needs*

The BCH User's Guide is designed as a series of modules and training tools that can be combined in different sets according to the training needs and interest of the users. They are intended for the eight stakeholder groups listed below.

- BCH National Focal Points, National Authorized Users and other people responsible for making national information available through the BCH;

- Decision-Makers and members of national government organizations that will regularly use information in the BCH and generate information to be made available to it (e.g. Competent National Authorities; BCH Task Force; risk assessors);

- Non-government organizations and civil society representatives who may participate in decision-making processes and use the BCH to network and share information;

- Industry groups needing to access information to apply for import and export of LMOs;

- Scientists, researchers, academic institutions and other biosafety organizations who need to access and share scientific, technical and capacity-building information;

- Customs officers and enforcement officials using the BCH to find data relating to border control;

- Media representatives using the BCH as a source of biosafety information ;

- Members of the public who want to use the BCH to find information related to biosafety.

3. Available Resources

The User's Guide complete collection includes a variety of training tools, to be used in various combinations to assist in training people to use the BCH. The main resources available are elaborated below.

3.1. *Training Modules*

	There are several training modules available in PDF format, which provide a range of information from introductory material to in depth review. Most modules contain interactive exercises and detailed walk-through of the steps required for each activity. The following topics are addressed:
	MO01 Introduction to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
	MO02 Introduction to the Biosafety Clearing-House
	MO03 Surfing the BCH Central Portal
	MO04 Finding Information in the BCH Central Portal
	MO05 Recommended Guidelines for Countries
	MO06 Using the Management Centre
	MO07 Registering National Information
	MO08 Sharing Biosafety Information
	MO10 Information-Sharing Obligations on Becoming a Party to the Protocol

3.2. Interactive Modules

There are two interactive training modules designed to enable users to understand the concepts of the Biosafety Protocol and Biosafety Clearing-House in a hands-on manner. The modules are designed in Macromedia Flash.

IM01   Introduction to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
IM02   Introduction to the Biosafety Clearing-House

3.3. *Case Studies*

There are several interactive case studies designed to assist users in applying the concepts covered in the various training modules

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CS01	Mexican trader importing cotton seed
CS02	Regulator researches LMO-FFPs
CS03	Registering data into the BCH CP: Users Management
CS04	Registering data into the BCH CP: Contacts and CNA
CS05	Registering data into the BCH CP: LMOs and Decisions on LMOs
CS06	Registering data into the BCH CP: Risk Assessment and Laws
CS07	Custom officer seeks information on importing LMOs
CS08	Scientist looks for information on commercially available GM cotton
CS09	Scientist seeks information on importing LMOs
CS10	Information CNA must provide to the BCH about a decision
CS11	Medical researcher seeks information on AIA
CS12	Company representative seeks how to submit record to the BCH
CS13	National Development Agency seeks information on existing Capacity Building programs
CS14	CNA representative seeks information on how to submit record to the BC
CS15	Person looks for information about a GM food product
CS16	Organization registers a contact person
CS17	Organization registers biosafety newsletter
CS18	Academic institution registers biosafety course and workshop
CS19	Journalist researches story about possible illegal transboundary movement of an LMO
CS20	Country has just become a Party to the Cartagena Protocol
CS21	Regulator considers request to import potatoes
CS22	Risk assessor seeks information on virus resistant papaya
CS23	NFP registers biosafety expert
CS24	Inspector discovers illegal LMO
CS25	NFP registers decision and RA on GM cotton
CS26	NFP registers laws
CS27	Central Portal Information Route

3.4. *Ready Reference Guide*

There are several reference handouts available that provide quick overviews of frequently used features of the BCH and may be used as desk references after training is complete. The following guides are available:

RR01   BCH Quick Start
RR02   Common Acronyms
RR03   BCH Record Types
RR04   BCH Icons
RR05   Short Glossary
RR06   Management Centre
RR07   Decisions and Declarations
RR08   Introduced Traits
RR09   Contact Points: People and Organizations
RR10   Information Resources
RR11   Unique Identification
RR12   Information to be Posted on the BCH
RR13   Timeframe for Posting Information
RR14   New Party Checklist

3.5. *Discussion Points with Answer Keys*

There are several cards with different scenarios for discussion that can be used thought the training along with the answer keys

3.6. *Quiz Questions with Answer Keys*

There are several quiz questions available that provide quick interaction with participants and an easy way to gauge understanding of different uses of the BCH and may be used through the training

3.7. *Operational Handbook*

The Operational Handbook provides detailed information for countries about participation in the UNEP-GEF Project for "Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH)"

3.8. *Promotional Material*

Contains a one page poster and a short leaflet with basic content that can be customized by the country running the stakeholder courses and used as promotional materials

3.9. *Exercises*

There are several exercises for BCH training Workshop

3.10. *Hermes BCH Development Tool*

Recently, SCBD has deployed a new application, code name HERMES, that can be used easily by countries willing to have their own simple national application, but do not have the resources to, or do not want to develop their own systems.

HERMES will run on SCBD servers, instantiated for each particular country. At the country level, it is just needed to have available computers with internet access and browsers. Customization is also performed via internet.

3.11. *Ajax BCH Development Tool*

The BCH *Ajax Plug-In* is a lightweight JavaScript application based on Ajax technology that can be easily integrated to any website to allow dynamic display of information from the BCH Central Portal.

The use of the BCH *Ajax Plug-In* does not require any specific IT knowledge. The Plug-In works on all server platforms and does not require any software installation. All required files are located on the BCH Central Portal and maintained by the Secretariat.

The BCH *Ajax Plug-In* is a client side application. The connection to the BCH Central Portal is made directly by the client (end-user).