



Press Brief

Biosafety Clearing-House

Background

The Protocol established the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) as a mechanism to facilitate the exchange of information on, and experience with, living modified organisms (LMOs) and to assist Parties to implement the Protocol provisions. The BCH is accessible at: <http://bch.cbd.int/>.

What has been done?

At its first meeting, the COP-MOP adopted the modalities of operation of the BCH, describing its core roles and characteristics; its administration and technical oversight, including the responsibilities of the Secretariat, BCH National Focal Points and relevant organizations; and the modalities for periodic reporting and review of the BCH operations.

At its second, the COP-MOP adopted a multi-year programme of work for the operation of the BCH setting out 5 key objectives and a number of activities to achieve them.

At its third and fourth meetings, the COP-MOP reviewed the implementation of the work programme and took additional decisions to improve the operations of the BCH. In response, the Secretariat made several improvements to the structure and functionality of the BCH, including improvement of the structure of the common formats for submission of information to the BCH, simplification of the procedure for registration and validation of information in the BCH, update of the BCH help system, translation of the BCH into the six UN languages, and introduction of tools for the analysis and graphic representation of the BCH search results. The Secretariat also commissioned an online study of users and potential users of the BCH.



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<http://bch.cbd.int/protocol>



What is expected at COP-MOP 5?

At its fifth meeting, the COP-MOP is expected to, among other things:

- Consider the progress report on the programme of work for the operation of the BCH and to provide further guidance, which might include: decisions for enhancing capacity-building in the use of the BCH and ensuring the sustainability of national BCH nodes.
- Take appropriate action on recommendations of the Informal Advisory Committee on the BCH regarding the assessment of the multi-year programme of work.
- Consider the outcomes and recommendations of the study on users and potential users of the BCH and take appropriate action.

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