

South Asia Biosafety Program

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Save the Date September 11-13, 2017

5th Annual South Asia Biosafety Conference
Taj West End, Bangalore
Registration Information to Follow



INDIA

Workshop on Phase II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety: Outcomes and Way Forward

At the request of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), the ILSI Research Foundation provided technical support under the risk assessment and risk management component of the Phase II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety, including: workshops on problem formulation and other aspects of environmental risk assessment (ERA); a survey of the pipeline of genetically engineered crops in development in India; a comprehensive set of resource documents, including eight crop-specific biology documents; training materials related to ERA; and a study tour to share learnings with the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (Australia).

On March 15, MoEF&CC convened a culminating workshop in New Delhi to mark the completion of the Phase II project, including the launch of a new E-Application System and the release of publications arising from the project. Stay tuned for the April SABP Newsletter to learn more about this event.



BRRRI Workshop on Data Collection and Compliance Management of Golden Rice CFTs

Mr. Md. Abdul Momin, Senior Liaison Officer & Communication Focal Point of Golden Rice Project and Dr. Md. Abdul Kader, Senior Scientist and Principal Investigator, Golden Rice Project, BRRRI, Gazipur



To familiarize involved scientists and personnel with the objectives, design, methodology, and data to be generated from the GR2E (Golden Rice) multi-location confined field trials (CFTs) during the 2017 boro season, a one-day workshop was held on January 25, 2017, at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRRI) headquarters in Gazipur.

The workshop was convened to discuss procedures for data collection and compliance management of the upcoming Golden Rice CFTs and was attended by 30 participants from BRRRI headquarters, the four regional BRRRI stations at Comilla, Barisal, Habiganj and Rajshahi, as well as Golden Rice Project members from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines.

The objectives of the workshop were to review basic procedures for the compliance management of CFTs in accordance with the Bangladesh Biosafety Guidelines, train all involved BRRRI personnel in the implementation of relevant BRRRI Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and record-keeping requirements, and review internal and external communication procedures, including the transmittal of reports, monitoring forms, and related records as required.

Dr. Bhagya Rani Banik, Director General, BRRRI, was present as the Chief Guest of the workshop in the opening ceremony, whereas Dr. Md. Shahjahan Kabir, Director of Administration & Common Service, BRRRI; Dr. Noel P. Magor, IRRI Country Representative for Bangladesh; and Dr. Donald J. MacKenzie, Regulatory Affairs and Stewardship Leader, Golden Rice Project, IRRI, were present as special guests on the occasion. The workshop was chaired by Dr. Md. Ansar Ali, Director (Research), BRRRI. Dr Tamal Lata Aditya, Head of Plant Breeding,

BRRRI and Dr Md Abdul Kader, Senior Scientist and Principal Investigator for the Golden Rice Project, BRRRI, were also present in the inauguration ceremony to deliver their valuable insights.

In the discussion session, Dr. Kader reviewed results from the evaluation of 23 introgression lines of GR2E Golden Rice conducted during the 2016 boro season CFT at Gazipur, where several lines showing good agronomic performance and high levels of β -carotene expression were identified for advancement. An overview of the project status, the regulatory submission plans in Bangladesh and elsewhere, and the purpose of CFTs and compliance management principles, was provided by Dr. MacKenzie.

“This marks another important milestone in the development and delivery of provitamin A biofortified rice to help combat vitamin A deficiency in Bangladesh.”

Dr. Russell Reinke, Senior Scientist and Rice Breeder of Biofortification, IRRI, discussed the types of data and observations to be recorded during the CFTs, and required recording formats. IRRI's Stewardship Manager, Dr. Eduardo Fernandez, covered transplanting and current season management, including monitoring and record keeping requirements. Mr. Raul Boncodin, Senior Manager, Golden Rice Project, IRRI, presented harvest and post-harvest management procedures, while external communications preparedness was reviewed by Ms. Temina Lalani-Shariff, Head of Communication, IRRI.

The upcoming GR2E Golden Rice CFTs at five locations will be used to collect relevant agronomic and phenotypic data required to complete the environmental risk assessment, and will form part of a future submission for full biosafety approval in Bangladesh. This marks another important milestone in the development and delivery of provitamin A biofortified rice to help combat vitamin A deficiency in Bangladesh.



Inauguration of GMO Detection Laboratory at the Department of Environment

Dr. M. Imdadul Hoque, Dean, Faculty of Biological Sciences, University of Dhaka and Country Coordinator, South Asia Biosafety Program, Dhaka

The Department of Environment (DOE), Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh recently established a genetically modified organism (GMO) detection laboratory under the UNEP-GEF-funded Implementation of National Biosafety Framework (INBF) project. The laboratory is equipped with all modern molecular biology set up including real time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) machines, centrifuges, freezers (-20°C, -80°C, etc.), DNA hybridization chamber, gel electrophoresis set up and photo documentation set up.

On February 19, 2017, the inaugural ceremony of the laboratory was held at the Chameli Conference Room of the DOE. Mr. Anwar Hossain Manju, MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh inaugurated the laboratory as the Chief Guest. Mr. Abdullah Al Islam Jakob, MP, Honorable Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment and Forests and Mr. Md. Nurul Karim, Secretary (Acting), Ministry of Environment and Forests graced the ceremony as the Special Guests. Mr. Md. Raisul Alam Mondal, Director General, Department of Environment chaired the inaugural ceremony.

Mr. Mohammed Solaiman Haider, Director (Planning), Department of Environment & Project Director, INBF Project, gave an overview on the project objectives highlighting the objective of the establishment of the GMO detection laboratory at DOE.

The ceremony was witnessed by the high officials including Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Additional Secretary, and other officials of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Environment and invited guests from universities, and other government organizations. Among others, Dr. Andrew F. Roberts, Deputy Executive Director, ILSI Research Foundation, and Prof. Dr. M. Imdadul Hoque, Bangladesh Country Coordinator, South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP) were also present during this inaugural ceremony. A huge number of media personnel were also in attendance. After the inauguration, the Honorable Minister, Deputy Minister and the dignitaries went around the laboratory while the scientists and project consultants showed the equipment of the laboratory as well as described their functions.



ISBGMO14 PROGRAM ANNOUNCED WITH 50+ SPEAKERS FROM ACADEMIA, GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Join the 2016 South Asia Biosafety Conference Poster Winner, Ms. Lourdes Taylo, along with academics, technology developers, regulatory authorities, non-government organisations and other credible stakeholders involved in all aspects of biosafety at the 14th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (ISBGMO14) on June 4-8, 2017 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

ISBGMO14 offers a unique opportunity to share information and experiences and engage in open and meaningful dialogue on biosafety research, risk analysis, policy and regulatory matters.

Early bird registration is available until May 1, 2017.

To view the full program and to register, please visit the conference website at <http://isbr.info/ISBGMO14>

ISBGMO Sessions Include:

- Effects of Vertical Gene Flow Between GM Plants and Sexually Compatible Relatives – Dangerous Liaisons?
- Types of Evidence and Efforts Necessary to Inform the Safety Assessment of Unintended Effects in GM Plants
- Biosafety Research, Risk Assessment Experiences and Capacity Building in Latin America
- ERA vs. Ecological Research – The Relevance of a Good Problem Formulation to Ensure That Gathered Data are Useful for ERA
- GMOs in Integrated Pest Management
- Gene Drive Systems and GM Insects for Pest Control
- Plant Genome Editing – Any Novel Features to Consider for ERA and Regulation?
- Biosafety and ERA of GM Algae
- Capacities for the Risk Assessment of GMOs: Challenges to Build Sustainable Systems

EVENT	ORGANIZED BY	DATE	WEBSITE
INDIA			
Workshop on "Phase-II Capacity Building Project on Biosafety: Outcomes and Way Forward"	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and BCIL	March 15, 2017 New Delhi	www.bcil.nic.in
INTERNATIONAL			
Risk Analysis for the Release of GMOs into the Environment	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) Biosafety Group	May 22-26, 2017 Trieste, Italy	www.icgeb.org/meetings-2017.html
14 th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (ISBGMO14)	International Society for Biosafety Research (ISBR)	June 4-8, 2017 Guadalajara, Mexico	http://isbr.info/ISBGMO14
BIO International Convention	Biotechnology Innovation Organization	June 19-22, 2017 San Diego, CA, USA	www.convention.bio.org
5 th Annual South Asia Biosafety Conference	SABP, ILSI Research Foundation, Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL)	September 11-13, 2017 Bangalore, India	Registration information coming soon

Interested in contributing to the SABP Newsletter?

The SABP Newsletter, published monthly, is distributed to over 10,000 regulators, scientists, policy makers and other stakeholders interested in agricultural biotechnology in South Asia. Each edition includes editorials, information about biosafety regulation and policy developments in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, SABP and other capacity building activities in the region, and related science or news stories. All contributions to the newsletter should have a clear connection to the mission of SABP, relate to South Asia and cannot be promotional. For more information or for your article to be considered, please email Libby Williams at lwilliams@ilsirf.org.



SOUTH ASIA
BIOSAFETY PROGRAM

The South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP) is an international developmental program implemented in India and Bangladesh with support from the United States Agency for International Development. SABP aims to work with national governmental agencies and other public sector partners to facilitate the implementation of transparent, efficient and responsive regulatory frameworks for products of modern biotechnology that meet national goals as regards the safety of novel foods and feeds, and environmental protection.



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