

# South Asia Biosafety Program

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Newsletter

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## Feedback Requested for the 2016 South Asia Biosafety Conference

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asia Biosafety Conference will be convened September 2016 in Hyderabad, India.

The organizers are seeking input on topics that should be considered for the agenda as it is important to keep this conference relevant and targeted to the needs of colleagues in South Asia.

Please provide feedback by January 6, 2016, by accessing the survey: **[www.surveymonkey.com/r/SABC2016Interest](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SABC2016Interest)**

## We want to hear from you!

The SABP Newsletter, published monthly, is distributed to over 4000 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.

Interested in contributing to the SABP newsletter? 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 [libbywilliams@ilsa.org](mailto:libbywilliams@ilsa.org).



# Status Update on the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

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



On October 31, 2015, the Department of Environment (DOE) of Bangladesh organized a consultation workshop focused on the Third National Report for the Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). This workshop was held at the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission in Dhaka.

Bangladesh is a party to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and signed the CPB on May 24, 2000. It ratified the protocol on February 2, 2004 and became effective on May 5, 2004. Under the requirements of the protocol, Bangladesh submitted the first report on the implementation of the protocol on September 11, 2007. The second report was submitted on September 30, 2011. The third report, containing a questionnaire of approximately 205 questions, was a follow up to the first two. This questionnaire was initially filled in by a small team of experts and was finalized during this consultation workshop.

Approximately 50 participants attended the workshop representing government ministries, National Agricultural Research System (NARS) institutes, private agri-business companies, public and private universities and foreign-aided biotechnology projects like the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh Agricultural University, BRAC University, the South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP), Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II (ABSP II) and Advanced Chemical Industries (ACI).

Attendees came from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, the Ministry of Science & Technology, the Ministry of Law,

Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, the DOE, the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), the Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA), the Bangladesh Sugar Research Institute (BSRI), Bangladesh Forest Research Institute (BFRI), the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI), the Cotton Development Board (CDB), the Department of Fisheries, the National Institute of Biotechnology (NIB), and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC).

The workshop began with a welcoming address by Mr. M. Solaiman Haider, Director (Planning), Department of Environment, who serves as the Contact Officer for the report. Following his address, Mr. Haider invited Prof. Dr. M. Imdadul Hoque, Dean, Faculty of Biological Sciences, University of Dhaka and Country Coordinator, SABP, to present the pre-populated report. Prof. Hoque requested comments and suggestions for each of the questions. The participants took part actively and gave valuable suggestions. The finalized report is now available on the CBD website.

Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Hon'ble Secretary, MOEF, was present as the Chief Guest during the day-long consultation workshop. Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Additional Secretary (Development), MOEF, was present as the Special Guest while Mr. Raisul Alam Mondal, Director General, Department of Environment, chaired the workshop. The consultation workshop ended with the vote of thanks offered by Mr. Haider.

**The Third National Report  
on the Implementation of  
the Cartagena Protocol on  
Biosafety is available at:  
<http://bit.ly/1Uorrrym>**





## Highlights from the Annual Plant Tissue Culture & Biotechnology Conference

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



The Bangladesh Association for Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology (BAPTC&B) organized their annual conference on November 13-14, 2015 at the Hotel Sea Palace, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. The conference was organized through the sponsorship of the University of Dhaka, ESCO and Hamdard Laboratories WAQF Bangladesh Ltd.

Approximately 120 biotechnologists from universities and National Agricultural Research System (NARS) institutes attended this conference.

Prof. Dr. A.A.M.S. Arefin Siddique, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, University of Dhaka, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Prof. Dr. M. Imdadul Hoque, Dean, Faculty of Biological Sciences and Bangladesh Country Coordinator, SABP, was present as the Special Guest. The inaugural ceremony began with the welcoming address by Prof. Dr. M. M. Haque, President, BAPTC&B.

In his speech, Prof. Haque briefly highlighted the BAPTC&B activities and the conference's background. He also described the BAPTC&B's humble beginnings in 1989 and the initiatives of its members to establish biotechnology laboratories at all the universities and NARS institutes in the public and private sectors.

During the inaugural address, Prof. Arefin Siddique pointed out the need for biotechnology research to help solve pressing issues and to reduce the time required to produce improved crop varieties. He also

stressed the vital role of biotechnology in keeping up with the agricultural challenges brought on by climate change and the increasing population.

Prof. M. Imdadul Hoque pointed out the challenges of Bangladesh agriculture due to the ever increasing population as well as climate change and environmental problems. He shared that agricultural biotechnology can be used as one of the potential tools to develop abiotic and biotic stress tolerant crop varieties, especially making a crop salt and drought tolerant, so that it may be possible to utilize a huge area which is prone to salinity and drought.

The inaugural ceremony of the conference was ended with the vote of thanks offered by Prof. Dr. Sheikh Shamimul Alam, General Secretary, BAPTC&B.

After the inaugural ceremony, a scientific session was held with 15 papers presented. The scientific presentations were on different aspects of plant tissue culture and genetic transformation on various economic and ornamental crops.

Mr. Rony M.J.H. Chowdhury, NSF Accredited Class II Biosafety Cabinet Field Certifier Manager, ESCO, Bangladesh also gave a presentation during the conference on the overview and safe use of laboratory ventilation equipment.

The conference concluded with the annual general meeting of BAPTC&B.

**"Agricultural biotechnology can be used as one of the potential tools to develop abiotic and biotic stress tolerant crop varieties"**

EVENT	ORGANIZED BY	DATE	WEBSITE
<b>INDIA</b>			
Silver Jubilee Celebrations "Successful Endeavors of BCIL – Its Journey of 25 Years"	Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL)	December 19, 2015 New Delhi	<a href="http://www.bcil.nic.in/">www.bcil.nic.in/</a>
National Conference on Intellectual Property Rights in Agriculture: Needs and Future Prospects	Bihar Agricultural University	December 22-23, 2015 Bhagalpur	<a href="http://www.bausabour.ac.in/">www.bausabour.ac.in/</a>
International Conference on Advances in Bioprocess Engineering and Technology (ICABET 2016)	TEQIP-II	January 20-22, 2016 Kolkata	<a href="http://www.icabet.org/">www.icabet.org/</a>
National Seminar on Plant Genomics and Biotechnology Challenges and Opportunities in 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Department of Agricultural Biotechnology, College of Agriculture, and Orissa University of Agriculture & Technology	January 23-24, 2016 Bhubaneswar	<a href="http://www.ouat.ac.in/ForthEvents.aspx">www.ouat.ac.in/ ForthEvents.aspx</a>
Winter School on Marker Free Transgenics and Methods of Transgene Detection	ICAR-National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology	February 1-21, 2016 New Delhi	<a href="http://www.nrcpb.org/sites/default/files/Brochure_winter%20school.pdf">www.nrcpb.org/sites/ default/files/Brochure_ winter%20school.pdf</a>
Recent Advances In Improvement of Vegetable Crops	Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry Nauni-Solan	February 17 - March 8, 2016 Solan, Himachal Pradesh	<a href="http://www.yspuniversity.ac.in/trainings/caft-brochure-16.pdf">www.yspuniversity.ac.in/ trainings/caft-brochure-16. pdf</a>
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>			
International Symposium on "The Role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition"	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	February 15-17, 2016 Rome, Italy	<a href="http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/agribiotechs-symposium/en/">www.fao.org/about/ meetings/agribiotechs- symposium/en/</a>



**The South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP)** is an international developmental program implemented in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan 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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