

# South Asia Biosafety Program

NEWSLETTER FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY – NOT FOR SALE



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## INDIA

## ICAR-NBPGR Training Programme on Genome-Edited and Genetically Engineered (GE) Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies

Dr. Monika Singh, Senior Scientist, Division of Genomic Resources, ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBPGR)



Organizers, resource persons, and Delhi-based participants during the Valedictory Session of the "ICAR-NBPGR Training Programme on Genome-Edited and Genetically Engineered (GE) Crops" (24 January 2026).

To commemorate 50 years of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBPGR) and to strengthen national capacity in the area of biosafety assessment, ICAR-NBPGR, with the support of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, successfully organized the six-day "Training Programme on Genome Edited and Genetically Engineered (GE)/Genetically Modified (GM) Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies." The program was held virtually on 19-24 January 2026 at ICAR-NBPGR and was organized under the ongoing DBT-funded "National Programme for Quarantine and GM Diagnostics of Genetically Engineered Plant Material" (Component-2, focusing on molecular testing and GM diagnostics).

**"The primary objective of the training program was to acquaint participants with the latest developments in GE and genome-edited plants, with special emphasis on biosafety considerations."**

The primary objective of the training program was to acquaint participants with the latest developments in GE and genome-edited plants, with special emphasis on biosafety considerations, national regulatory mechanisms and policies, and detection methods and strategies relevant to genetically modified (GM) and genome-edited crops. The program attracted pan-India participation, with 133 participants from 21 states and union territories, representing researchers, and scientists from ICAR institutes, central and state agricultural universities, central and state universities, deemed and private universities, and private sector organizations, apart from regulators.

The inaugural session was held in the gracious presence of Dr. R. C. Bhattacharya, Director, ICAR-National Institute for Plant Biotechnology

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Launch of the “Training Manual on Genome Edited and Genetically Engineered (GE) Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies” during the Inaugural Session (19 January 2026).

(NIPB) as the Chief Guest. The program was led by Course Directors—Dr. Gyanendra Pratap Singh, Director, ICAR-NBPGR and Dr. Rakesh Singh, Principal Scientist and Head, Division of Genomic Resources—along with the Course Coordinators—Dr. Monika Singh (PI, DBT Project, Component-2) and Dr. Amit Kumar Singh (Co-PI, DBT Project)—and Course Co-ordinators—Drs. Sangita Bansal, Shruti Sinha, D. P. Wankhede, and Badal Singh. As a part of the inaugural proceedings, dignitaries were welcomed and thanked.

The occasion also marked the formal release of the *Training Manual on Genome Edited and Genetically Engineered (GE) Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies*, which was prepared as a comprehensive reference on biosafety and detection of GM and genome edited crops. Dr. Bhattacharya, in his welcome remarks, emphasized the critical role of GE and genome editing technologies in sustainable agriculture and food security and stressed the importance of capacity building and regulatory preparedness to address emerging biosafety challenges associated with these technologies.

The training program comprised 18 lectures, delivered by distinguished external experts including Dr. Vibha Ahuja (South Asia Biosafety Program Senior Advisor and former Chief General Manager of Biotech Consortium India Limited), Dr. Ramcharan Bhattacharya (Director, ICAR-NIPB), Dr. Viswanathan Chinnusamy (Joint Director–Research, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute), Dr. Siddharth Tiwari (Scientist-F, BRIC-National Agri-Food and Biomanufacturing Institute),

Dr. Kutubuddin Ali Molla (Senior Scientist, ICAR-Central Rice Research Institute), Dr. Durgesh Singh (Senior Field Application Specialist, Bio-Rad Laboratories), and internal faculty members from ICAR-NBPGR.

The technical sessions were organized under four thematic areas: (i) Plant Genetic Resources and Genomic Resources, (ii) Genetically Modified Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies, (iii) Genome-Edited Crops: Biosafety Considerations, Policies, Challenges, and Detection Strategies, and (iv) Emerging Technologies in

Detection of GM and Genome-Edited Crops. Four practical sessions on the development of genome-edited crops, detection of genome-edited crops, detection of GM crops, and decision rule for the interpretation of test results were conducted. These hands-on sessions used audio-visual aids to provide participants with valuable insights into laboratory workflows and real-world applications associated with GM and genome edited crop detection.

The program concluded with a valedictory session chaired by Dr. V. B. Patel, Assistant Director General (Fruits and Plantation Crops), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). After welcoming the dignitaries, Dr. G. P. Singh Director, ICAR-NBPGR, delivered the valedictory address, and Dr. Rakesh Singh presented a brief report on the training program. Feedback received from participants reflected high levels of satisfaction with strong appreciation for the depth of content, clarity of regulatory discussions, and relevance of practical demonstrations.

**“Dr. Bhattacharya [...] emphasized the critical role of GE and genome editing technologies in sustainable agriculture and food security and stressed the importance of capacity building and regulatory preparedness.”**



Drs. Vibha Ahuja, Monika Singh, and Shruti Sinha, speaking to online participants attending the training program.

# The 11<sup>th</sup> International Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology Conference in Dhaka

Abida Anjum, Plant Breeding and Biotechnology Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Dhaka



Group photo of participants at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Plant Tissue Culture & Biotechnology Conference 2026 in Dhaka (24 January 2026).

The 11<sup>th</sup> International Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology Conference was successfully organized on 24-26 January 2026 at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh. The conference was organized jointly by the Bangladesh Association for Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology (BAPTC&B) and the University of Dhaka.

This prestigious international event brought together researchers, academics, students, industry professionals, policymakers, and development partners to exchange scientific knowledge and explore emerging trends in plant biotechnology. This landmark conference provided an interactive platform for a wide spectrum of stakeholders to come together, share perspectives, and critically examine recent advancements and emerging challenges in the rapidly advancing field of plant biotechnology.

Over the years, BAPTC&B has played a central role in advancing scientific innovation and strengthening the plant biotechnology sector in Bangladesh. Since its establishment in 1989, the association has remained at the forefront of promoting research and development in plant tissue culture and related biotechnological disciplines nationwide. Its primary mission centers around the adoption and dissemination of modern biotechnology, with its efforts directed at the micropropagation and genetic improvement of crops, as well as sustained efforts in fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and capacity building via national and international conferences, specialized training workshops, and the publication of its reputable journal, *Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology (PTC&B)*. BAPTC&B continues to significantly contribute to the advancement of agri-biotechnological research and innovation in the country.

The central theme of the conference, “Advanced Genomics and Biotechnological Applications for Food Security and Environmental Sustainability,” reflected the growing global emphasis on integrating genomics-driven innovations with sustainable agricultural and environmental solutions. The conference served as a significant platform to discuss cutting-edge research, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and address pressing challenges related to food security, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability.

## INAUGURAL CEREMONY

The inaugural ceremony took place on 24 January 2026 at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, University of Dhaka. The session commenced with the recitation from the Holy Qur’an, followed by an address of welcome by the chair. The inaugural session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Rakha Hari Sarker, President of BAPTC&B. The ceremony was graced by distinguished guests from academia, research organizations, and government institutions. Prof. Dr. Haseena Khan, esteemed fellow of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS), delivered the keynote lecture on the conference theme, highlighting the role of advanced genomics, data-driven plant biotechnology, and AI-integrated approaches in addressing agricultural and environmental challenges in developing countries.

The inaugural session concluded with addresses from the Chief Guest, Prof. Dr. Mamun Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the University of Dhaka. Special Guests included Prof. Dr. Md. Sagir Ahmed, Director General of the National Institute of Biotechnology, and Prof. Dr. Md. Enamul Haque, Dean of the Faculty of Biological Sciences, University of Dhaka. Dr. F. H. Ansarey, the group advisor of ACI PLC and President of ACI Agribusinesses, graced the event as the Guest of Honor. A vote of thanks delivered by Prof. Dr. Mohammad Nurul Islam, the Organizing Secretary of the conference, concluded the inaugural ceremony.

## SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

The scientific program of the conference was extensive and rigorously curated. A total of 130 abstracts were submitted from researchers representing universities, research institutes, and industries across Bangladesh and abroad. Following a peer-review process, 42 abstracts were selected for oral presentations, while 70 posters were accepted and displayed during the poster sessions.

The conference featured nine scientific sessions, covering diverse and contemporary topics, including plant tissue culture, functional genomics, genome editing, stress biology, synthetic biology, molecular breeding, microbial biotechnology, bioinformatics, conservation biotechnology, sustainable agricultural technologies, and commercial

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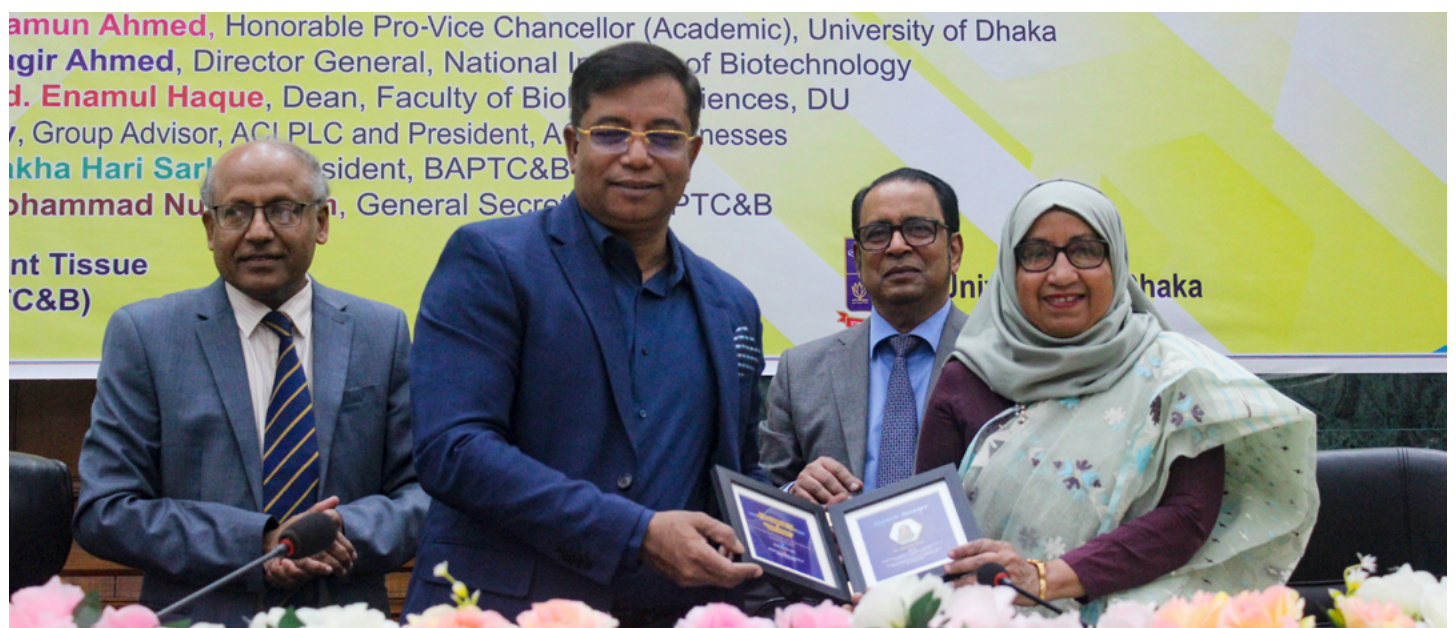
Guests and speakers during the conference's inaugural session (24 January 2026).

applications, as well as safety issues related to genetically engineered, transgenic, and genome edited crops. These sessions provided an interactive platform for in-depth scientific discussions and knowledge exchange among senior scientists and early-career researchers.

In addition to contributed papers, the conference hosted a panel of invited speakers from international institutions, several national research organizations, universities, and industrial sectors, including experts from

Gazipur Agricultural University, Institute of Life Sciences (India), Tribhuvan University (Nepal), Saskatchewan University (Canada), Bangladesh Council for Scientific & Industrial Research, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Adamas University, South Asian University (India), Sher E Bangla Agricultural University, and University of Rajshahi. Their presentations enriched the conference by offering global perspectives on translational research, policy implications, and industry-academia collaborations.

**“These sessions provided an interactive platform for in-depth scientific discussions and knowledge exchange among senior scientists and early-career researchers.”**



Prof. Dr. Rakha Hari Sarker (Inaugural Ceremony Chair), Dr. F. H. Ansarey (Guest of Honor), Prof. Dr. Mamun Ahmed (Chief Guest), and Prof. Dr. Haseena Khan (Keynote Speaker) during the conference's inaugural ceremony (left to right).

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Guests during the conference's poster session (24 January 2026).

### POSTER SESSION

The poster session was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Asfaque Ahmed, Chairman of the Department of Botany, University of Dhaka. The poster session attracted significant interest and participation. The 70 accepted posters were displayed at the Department of Botany and evaluated by a panel of experienced judges. The poster presentations showcased innovative research findings and encouraged active interactions between presenters and participants. Outstanding posters were recognized for their scientific merit and contribution to the field.

Four posters were selected to receive prizes:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Prize:** "Studies on *In vitro* Regeneration Pathways of a Medicinal Plant - *Glaucidium palmatum* Siebold and Zucc. via Callus Culture" by Parag Das, Department of Botany, University of Rajshahi

**"The poster presentations showcased innovative research findings and encouraged active interactions between presenters and participants."**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Prize:** "Comparative Rhizosphere Metagenomics Reveals Taxonomic and Functional Gene Dynamics in Bt and Non-Bt Brinjal under Greenhouse Conditions" by Fabliha Tahsin Maima, Department of Botany, University of Dhaka

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Prize:** (i) "*In vitro* Regeneration of Foreign Fruits *Malus domestica* and *Hylocereus polyrhizus*" by Dewan Nishat Afrin, Department of Botany, Jagannath University, and (ii) "Expression Analysis of Salinity-responsive Genes (*TaHKT1*, *TaNHX1*) for Screening Salt-tolerant Wheat Varieties under *in vitro* Conditions" by Md.

Toufiq Hasan, Institute of Biotechnology, Bangladesh Agricultural University

The conference was designed to achieve multiple objectives, including the dissemination of advanced research findings, capacity building for young scientists, promotion of collaborative research, and exploration of biotechnology-driven solutions to food security and



Participants viewing posters at the conference's poster session (24 January 2026).



Participants at the conference (24 January 2026).

environmental challenges. Through keynote lectures, oral and poster presentations, and panel discussions, the conference successfully highlighted the transformative potential of genomics and biotechnology in sustainable development.

Participants benefited from exposure to state-of-the-art research methodologies and gained valuable insights into emerging scientific and policy-oriented dimensions of plant biotechnology. The conference also fostered networking opportunities that are expected to lead to future collaborative research initiatives at national and international levels.

The successful execution of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Plant Tissue Culture and Biotechnology Conference 2026 was strongly supported by the generous contributions of 24 sponsoring organizations representing government agencies, research institutions, financial bodies, and

**“Participants benefited from exposure to state-of-the-art research methodologies and gained valuable insights into emerging scientific and policy-oriented dimensions of plant biotechnology.”**

private-sector enterprises. Notable sponsors included the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh University Grants Commission, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, Bangladesh Forest Research Institute, and the National Museum of Science and Technology, reflecting robust public-sector engagement in advancing biotechnology research. Support was also extended by financial and development partners such as Southeast Bank PLC, Krishi Gobeshona Foundation, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, and Cotton Development Board, alongside research- and industry-driven organizations including ACI Agribusinesses, ACI PLC, ESCO Lifesciences Bangladesh Pvt. Limited, Unico CNG Limited, BD Genome, and Nestlé Bangladesh Limited. The collective involvement of these sponsors played a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth conduct of scientific sessions, facilitating research dissemination, and promoting



Participants at the conference (24 January 2026).

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meaningful interaction among participants. Their support underscores the growing recognition of plant biotechnology as a critical driver of food security, environmental sustainability, and innovation-led development. This year's event drew upon the rich legacy of previous BAPTC&B conferences and highlighted the organization's sustained dedication to advancing scientific excellence.

The conference stands as the latest milestone in this continuum of scientific achievements. This landmark gathering not only reinforced the knowledge and skills of participants in contemporary plant tissue culture and biotechnology methodologies but also served as a crucible for forging innovative partnerships among researchers, academics, and industry leaders. The conference amplified awareness of plant biotechnology's critical role in confronting Bangladesh's pressing agricultural and food security imperatives, thereby stimulating renewed momentum

in research and development initiatives. Most significantly, this event further strengthened the vibrant and expanding plant biotechnology community in Bangladesh, ensuring its continued evolution and relevance.

In conclusion, the 11<sup>th</sup> International Plant Tissue Culture & Biotechnology Conference 2026, orchestrated by BAPTC&B, represented a pivotal moment in the advancement of plant biotechnology. By convening diverse stakeholders and establishing a robust platform for knowledge exchange, collaborative innovation, and professional development, the conference played an indispensable role in addressing the nation's critical agricultural and food security challenges. The persistent and visionary efforts of BAPTC&B continue to chart the trajectory of plant biotechnology in Bangladesh, positioning the nation at the forefront of this transformative scientific frontier.

## RESOURCE

### COP-MOP 11 Decisions Booklet

The *COP-MOP 11 Decisions Booklet* was published on 12 February 2026. The publication contains the text of the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at its eleventh meeting (COP-MOP 11), which was held in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024, online from 3 to 6 December 2024 (first resumed meeting), and in Rome from 25 to 27 February 2025 (second resumed meeting).

During COP-MOP 11, 14 decisions were adopted on a number of substantive and operational issues representing a further step towards the effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). The decisions further support the implementation plan and the capacity-building action plan for the Cartagena Protocol and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and in particular, Target 17.

Decisions on substantive issues covered the following topics: compliance (decisions CP11/1 A, B and C), matters related to the financial mechanism and resources (decision CP11/2), operation and activities of the Biosafety Clearing-House (decision CP11/3), risk assessment and risk management (decision CP11/7), detection and identification of living modified organisms (decision CP11/8), socioeconomic considerations (decision CP11/9), and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress (decision CP11/10).

Mirrored decisions were also adopted under the Convention and the Protocols on: procedures for convening online and hybrid meetings (decision CP11/4), options to further improve the effectiveness of processes under the Convention and its Protocols (decision CP11/5), procedure for avoiding or managing conflicts of interest in expert groups (CP11/6), administration of the Cartagena Protocol and budget for the trust funds (decision CP11/11), and costs of convening an in-person resumed session of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol (decision CP11/12).

Important highlights of the meeting included the decisions taken on the risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms. Parties welcomed new, additional voluntary guidance materials to support the case-by-case risk assessment of living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives, thereby enabling countries to tailor assessments to national contexts, taking into consideration ecological variables unique to their environments. In addition, Parties agreed to initiate another round of development of further guidance on risk assessment and risk management.

Regarding the detection and identification of living modified organisms, Parties requested the preparation of a compilation of technical reference materials to complement the *Biosafety Technical Series 05: Training Manual on the Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms in the Context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*.

The decisions included the development of a customized biosafety national website template using the *Bioland* tool, with a view to making it available to Parties wishing to build a national biosafety website with linkages to the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Regarding matters related to the financial mechanism and resources, Parties requested the Global Environment Facility to further explore modalities to reform its operations, including through the consideration of ways to increase funds dedicated to the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol.



Access the COP-MOP 11 Decisions Booklet at:

[https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb\\_publications.shtml](https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_publications.shtml)

## ICAR-Sponsored Awareness-cum-Training Programme on Genome Engineering and Gene Editing at Assam Agricultural University

Dr. Sumita Acharjee, Course Coordinator and Associate Professor, Assam Agricultural University (AAU)



Group photo of participants, speakers, and organizers at the ICAR-Sponsored Awareness-cum-Training Programme on Genome Engineering and Gene Editing at Assam Agricultural University (9 March 2024).

The DBT-North East Centre for Agricultural Biotechnology (DBT-NECAB) and the Department of Agricultural Biotechnology, in collaboration with the ICAR-National Institute for Plant Biotechnology in New Delhi, conducted a comprehensive four-day "ICAR-Sponsored Awareness-cum-Training Programme on Genome Engineering and Gene Editing" at Assam Agricultural University (AAU) in Jorhat through the All Indian Network Programme (AINP) on Biotech Crops. The event focusing on genome engineering and gene editing in plants commenced on 9 March 2026 and concluded on 12 March 2026.

**"The event focus[ed] on genome engineering and gene editing in plants."**

The program featured a cadre of distinguished speakers, including: Dr. Bidyut Kumar Sarmah, Director of DBT-NECAB and Head of the Department of Agricultural Biotechnology at AAU; Dr. Debasis Pattanayak, Principal Scientist at ICAR-NIPB; Dr. Vibha Ahuja, Technical Advisor and former Chief General Manager of Biotech Consortium India Ltd.; Dr. Siddharth Tiwari, Scientist at BRIC-NABI; Dr. Brett Ferguson, Professor at the University of Queensland; Dr. Channa Chikkaputtaiah, Senior Scientist at CSIR-NEIST; and Dr. Salvinder Singh, Professor in the Department of Agricultural Biotechnology, AAU. Complementing



Participants during the training program at AAU (9 March 2024).

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Speakers during the training program at AAU (9 March 2024).

these esteemed experts, Dr. Sumita Acharjee, Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Biotechnology at AAU and the Course Coordinator, delivered lectures encompassing various topics, including genetic engineering, CRISPR-based genome editing, and its application in agriculture. The Joint Course Coordinators were Dr. Priyadarshini Bhorali and Dr. Ratna Kalita, both Assistant Professors in the Department of Agricultural Biotechnology at Assam Agricultural University.

This initiative aimed to provide a platform for researchers, scientists, and students from the region to delve into the latest innovations and technologies within the area of modern genetic technology. A total of 40 participants from Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Manipur took part in this workshop, which includes attendees from AAU, to enhance their understanding of genetic engineering and genome editing tools.

Dr. Sarmah emphasized the advancements in genome engineering of Bt chickpea for insect resistance, which he and Dr. Acharjee have

**“A total of 40 participants from Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Manipur took part in this workshop [...] to enhance their understanding of genetic engineering and genome editing tools.”**

developed and tested under field conditions. Dr. Pattanayak elaborated on the available tools of genome editing for crop improvement. Dr. Tiwari and Dr. Chikkaputtaiah covered the application of genome editing tools in the development of edited banana and tomato varieties. Additionally, Dr. Ferguson participated online, discussing the applications of genome editing in both crops and livestock. Dr. Ahuja highlighted the regulatory frameworks in India relevant to transgenic and genome-edited plants, and Dr. Acharjee talked about the genome engineering and editing of grain legumes.

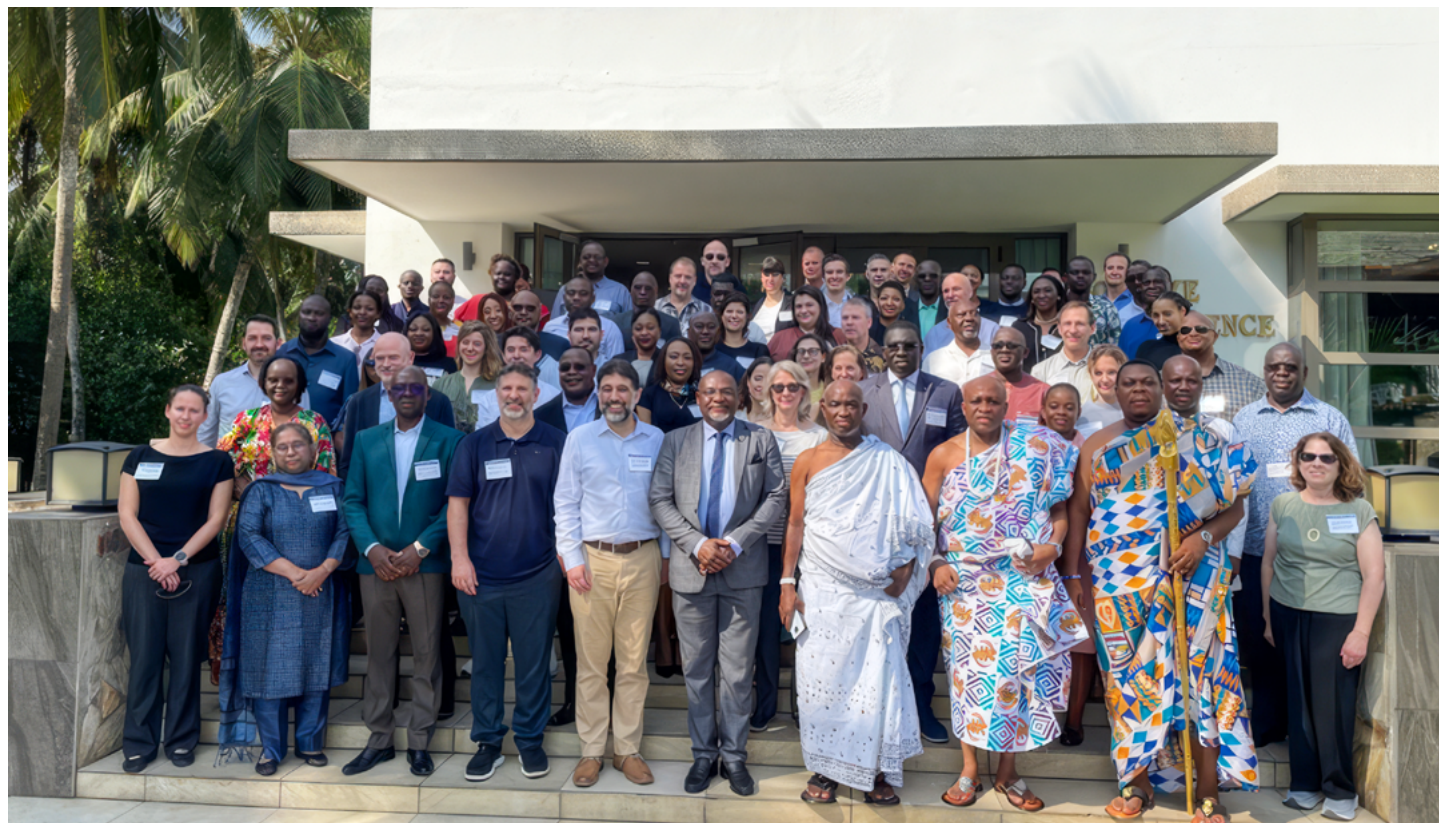
The participants expressed their satisfaction and urged the organizing committee to conduct long-term workshops to deepen their understanding of genome editing and to explore more hands-on experiences with editing cell lines. This initiative is anticipated to stimulate collaboration and inspire innovative research trajectories aimed at addressing pressing global agricultural and environmental challenges.



Participants during the training program at AAU (12 March 2026).

## Participation in the Gene Drive Research Forum 2025

Dr. Vibha Ahuja, Senior Advisor, South Asia Biosafety Program and Technical Advisor, Biotech Consortium India Limited



Participants at the Gene Drive Research Forum 2025 (2 December 2025).

The Gene Drive Research Forum on “Decision-Making for Gene Drive Applications: Social Science, Stakeholder Engagement, and Regulatory Systems” was organized in Accra, Ghana on 2-4 December 2025 by the Department of Animal Biology and Conservation Science, University of Ghana, in collaboration with the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) and the Genetic Engineering and Society Center (GES) at North Carolina State University. Dr. Vibha Ahuja, South Asia Biosafety Program Senior Advisor, participated in the forum and contributed to the discussions.

The focus of the meeting was communicating, understanding, and assessing the potential risks and benefits of applying modern “synthetic biology” biotechnology such as gene drive in the environment. With malaria cases rising due to drug and insecticide resistance, gene drive technology, which can “drive” specific traits through wild mosquito

**“With malaria cases rising due to drug and insecticide resistance, gene drive technology [...] is increasingly seen as a necessary ‘next-generation’ biocontrol tool.”**

populations to render them infertile or unable to carry disease, is increasingly seen as a necessary “next-generation” biocontrol tool. Research underway to use gene drive technology in other organisms and stakeholder engagement/communication approaches were also presented.

The forum brought together an international cohort of scientists, African Union representatives, and policy experts to address the ethical and regulatory hurdles facing one of the most promising frontiers of biotechnology. The event served as a critical platform to align genetic innovation with African priorities.

Issues relevant to advancing experimental research toward stage-wise deployment in the field and real-world case studies of challenges faced by Target Malaria and Transmission Zero—ongoing projects in Burkina Faso, Uganda, and Tanzania—were discussed.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

## Bio-responsibility Future Leaders Programme at the Centre for Society and Policy, Indian Institute of Science

The Centre for Society and Policy (CSP) at the Indian Institute of Science is an interdisciplinary research centre working at the intersection of science, technology, innovation, and public policy. CSP engages deeply with emerging policy questions through its work on science diplomacy, bio-responsibility, data for policy, and science advice systems.

CSP is implementing “The Bio-Responsibility Project,” which aims to promote safe, secure and responsible life science research in our country. The broader vision is to build national capacity at the intersection of science, security and policy. The Bio-responsibility Future Leaders Programme (BFLP) was launched as part of this project. The BFLP is a year-long training and upskilling programme for early-career professionals. The topics covered under this programme include (but are not limited to) issues related to research involving the AI-Biology interface, synthetic biology, neurotechnology, human augmentation, cyber-biosecurity, dual-use research, gain-of-function research, permafrost-associated pathogens, etc. Professionals from science, industry, and government are encouraged to apply. The application deadline is **22 March 2026**.

**More details about the program are available at the link below:**

**[https://csp.iisc.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Bio-responsibility-Future-Leaders-Programme\\_EV-2026.pdf](https://csp.iisc.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Bio-responsibility-Future-Leaders-Programme_EV-2026.pdf)**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT	ORGANIZED BY	DATE	WEBSITE
<b>INDIA</b>			
2 <sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Biomanufacturing, Bio-Innovation, and Environment Sustainability (ICBBES 2026)	Department of Biotechnology, University Institute of Biotechnology, Chandigarh University	10-11 April 2026 Mohali	<a href="https://www.cuchd.in/conference/icbbes-26/">https://www.cuchd.in/conference/icbbes-26/</a>
14 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Recent Innovations and Sustainable Approaches in Agricultural, Biological, and Applied Sciences for Livelihood Security (RISAABASLS-2026)	Department and Directorate of Extension Education at Uttar Banga Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (UBKV), Agro Environmental Development Society (AEDS), and Cooch Behar Association for Cultivation of Agricultural Sciences	18-20 June 2026 Cooch Behar	<a href="https://www.ubkv.ac.in/">https://www.ubkv.ac.in/</a>
International Conference on Innovations to Transform Dryland Agriculture through South-South Cooperation	The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)	10-12 September 2026 Patancheru	<a href="https://www.icrisat.org/">https://www.icrisat.org/</a>
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>			
Third Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund	CBD Secretariat	7-9 April 2026 Cape Town, South Africa	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>
Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA) World Vegetable Center Vegetable Breeding Consortium Annual Workshop & Post-Workshop Tour	Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA)	5-7 May 2026 Tainan, Taiwan	<a href="https://apsaseed.org/">https://apsaseed.org/</a>
Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology	CBD Secretariat	19-22 May 2026 Montreal, Canada	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>
Twenty-first Meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	CBD Secretariat	10-12 June 2026 Montreal, Canada	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>
Fifteenth Meeting of the Liaison Group on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	CBD Secretariat	16-18 June 2026 Montreal, Canada	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>
Bio International Convention	Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)	22-25 June 2026 San Diego, USA	<a href="https://convention.bio.org/">https://convention.bio.org/</a>
Twenty-eighth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)	CBD Secretariat	17 July-1 August 2026 Nairobi, Kenya	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>
Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	CBD Secretariat	19-30 October 2026 Yerevan, Armenia	<a href="https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB">https://www.cbd.int/meetings?thm=CPB</a>



SOUTH ASIA  
BIOSAFETY PROGRAM

The South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP) is an international development program implemented in India and Bangladesh by the Agriculture & Food Systems Institute (AFSI). 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.



Agriculture &  
Food Systems  
Institute

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