

FORUM: Sustainable Development Commission Two (SDC 2)

QUESTION OF: Ensuring biosafety in the age of modern biotechnology

SUBMITTED BY: República Oriental del Uruguay

CO-SUBMITTERS: Seychelles, ECE, China, Colombia, Russian Federation, Armenia, Malta, Turkey, HRW, African Union, Tajikistan, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Kuwait, Guinea, Nauru, Spain, FAO, Ireland

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Alarmed by the member nations’ lack of response by governments to address and tackle the issue of biosafety,

Emphasizing the need for cooperation between all member states in order to tackle the issue and reach a consensus regarding both short and long term action plans regarding bio-safety,

Further emphasizing the importance of biotechnology in its assistance to enlarging the global food supply and securing a higher level of bio-safety, as well as the contributions to medicine and environmental protection sectors of our economy,

Noting with regret that, although biotechnology brings many advantages, this technology has the potential to become a grave threat in our local ecosystems with the prospect of mass extinction, if the risks are not properly assessed and controlled,

Recalling that biotechnology is defined as “engineering principles to produce valuable substances by deploying biological agents”,

1. Suggests that all member nations establish legislation that defines standard safety attire for all laboratories that engage in Genetic Modification (GM) which can be ensured in ways such as, but not limited to:
 - a) Defining a standard of recommended safety attire, including but not limited to Lab coats, gloves, goggles, long pants, etc.
 - b) Setting penalties for individuals who don’t abide by the minimum standard of attire, penalties such as, but not limited to:
 - i. Fines
 - ii. temporary suspension of research license after third violation
 - c) Setting a price ceiling for all lab wear that matches the standard set by the government;
2. Urges all member nations to subsidize (funded by the IMF) major scientific procedures in order to ensure adequate medical care for everyone, especially ones who are unable to afford them, in order to prevent all lab workers from being put in any positions of danger, subsidizing these procedures as a way of ensuring that:
 - a) There is quality attire that will offer more protection to lab workers from possible threats
 - b) Those previously severely harmed by any bio-technical device are able to afford the necessary upgrades to further improve their safety procedures
 - c) No human or animal population is placed in imminent danger as a result of reducing costs;
3. Calls for the establishment of an International Bio-safety Organization (IBO) which will deal with issues of bio-safety in ways such as but not limited to:
 - a) collecting data of scientists and researchers in the field of biotechnology and keeping the information under good protection with cryptographic methods
 - b) Compiling all publicly available research and discovery papers in the field of Biotechnology on a website created by the UN, in order to: provide countries with accessible information about how to protect their workers in such working environments
 - i. provide all accessible and public knowledge to countries in one place, so as to

facilitate its diffusion.

- c) promoting communications and transferring of biotechnology and its products by allowing the purchaser to contact the owner directly under supervision to ensure the trade is legal and corresponding to international agreements on biotechnology
 - d) compiling and posting the laws relevant to the bio-safety from different countries to provide guidelines and model for other countries' legislation;
 - e) Encourage cooperation with international governments and create legislation that will set an international standard for proper lab attire;
4. Asks to develop a Bio-safety Clearing House (BCH), in cooperation with the IBO, for all signed nations that will be constantly developing new bio-safety framework for its given nation and will:
- a) Have an operational team of qualified personnel, composed of legal experts, experts in the field of biotechnology, technicians to maintain the framework and other administrative members
 - b) launch monthly seminars organized with its team composed of
 - c) Spreading awareness on methods to combat biological agents
 - d) Providing assistance to governments with whatever they may need in relation to the issue at hand
 - e) Reminding the public of the importance of ensuring bio-safety;
5. Suggests all nations to adopt a similar model to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) employed by the government of the Seychelles which comprises of:
- a) Researching and highlighting the potential threats of biotechnology within each nation
 - b) Using this information to draft a five-year action plan that will
 - i. Target and combat the risks of biotechnology at its source, by setting strict and concrete laws that mandate safety regulations for biotechnology organizations and farmers employing GMOs in the production of their crop
 - ii. Work with the IBO and the nations given BCH to control the effects of genetically modified species which have already been exposed to the local ecosystem;
6. Encourages member nations to strengthen and improve equipment in laboratory settings as a way of effectively dealing with the dangers of biological agents and in assessing them correctly to minimize effects, which will be done through means such as but not limited to:
- a) increasing transparency in private firms conducting bio-research through releasing annual reports sent to the IBO with results on their previous and information on their future experimental procedures
 - b) Conducting routine inspections of large research firms, under the following conditions:
 - i. The search is approved by the government of the country in which the company conducts their research unless the firm is subsidized by the respective government
 - ii. The search is conducted in a scrupulous manner, being as attentive as possible;
7. Strongly recommends all projects from public and private corporations be approved by the nation's BHC (working with the IBO), and overseen if decided by the government as a way to ensure that:
- a) the bio-safety levels of a laboratory are not infringed in the continuation of the research
 - b) the research is morally acceptable, ensuring the well being of most participating subjects
 - c) ensuring all resources are spent in an efficient and well-assessed manner, projecting a high probability this funding will make advancements in the research topic, or in a certain field of science.