

# Latin America: Multi - Country Capacity Building for Compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety – LAC Biosafety



## The Project

The project Latin America: Multi - Country Capacity Building for Compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Bio safety – LAC - Bio safety, is a pioneering initiative for cooperation among mega bio diverse countries, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru, to strengthen their bio safety decision making capacity for compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Bio safety - CPB. In this sense, the Project has been established as a joint effort among national and international institutions that have a solid specialization in natural sciences, biodiversity, biotechnology, socio economy and communication.

## Objective

The objective of the project is to strengthen technical capacity in scientific knowledge generation in communications and biosafety decision-making for Compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Each country will be represented by a National Coordination and by competent entities with specialization, knowledge and complementary experience. Since the project would not only use but also increase the existing capacity in each country, partners agree in that a multi country approach is the most effective one allowing a faster impact and being more sustainable than alternative methods.

National coordinating agencies harbor excellence centers in areas directly related to bio safety; for example, on environment Embrapa Meio Ambiente from la Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária - EMBRAPA; on biology and agro biodiversity, the CIBCM of Costa Rica University, and on agriculture and agro biodiversity, the IBT of the Agrarian University La Molina, Peru and the Corporación colombiana de investigación agropecuaria CORPOICA, Colombia.

## Participating countries

The four participating countries in this project, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru have several characteristics in common:

- High levels of biodiversity of important crops and their wild relatives;
- Geographical distribution of wild relatives / weeds of economically important crops;

- Development and implementation of active projects with GEF financing and World Bank projects in agriculture and rural development;
- A potential and strategic future role they could carry out in bio safety management in their respective sub regions.
- The four countries had already developed and implemented bio safety legal frameworks previous to the Protocol of Cartagena. Furthermore, all of them have ratified the CBD and the PCB.

## **Project Strategy**

Each country faces varied limitations in its capacity to adhere fully to PCB requirements. In previous research to this project's formulation, participating countries identified as a priority the need to strengthen technical capacity for LMO assessment and management, and the need to disseminate technically based and understandable information to support planning and development of bio safety policies.

Therefore, the project places great emphasis on its efforts to strengthen LMO assessment, monitoring and risk management capacities on biodiversity associated with agriculture, keeping in mind socioeconomic impact considerations, and the role of communication and public perception.

Work in the main project is based mainly in high priority thematic areas that confer it its multi country dimension and its regional character.

Project's mechanism to achieve its objectives is regional strategic collaboration with national institutions of the four participating countries, regional international centers of agricultural research, and other committed entities that have a high level in complementary abilities.

## **Technical Project (FSP)**

### **Component 1**

#### **Strengthening technical capacity in knowledge generation for biosafety risk assessment and management**

This component seeks to strengthen regional technical capacity. It will use the crops cassava, cotton, maize, potato, and rice as models, and adapt methodologies to those tropical areas of the region that are rich in biodiversity. The methodologies proposed for carrying out this component are:

**A. Assess and monitor gene flow in biodiverse crops**

- Design and develop documentation and databases for assessing and monitoring the introgression and/or persistence of genes, and for drafting and mapping the geographic distribution of crops, landraces, weeds, and wild relatives. Geographic information systems (GIS) and other methodologies will be used.
- Adapt and standardize methodologies for large-scale monitoring of gene flow in the region.
- Develop crop management strategies and operational guidelines on preventing or minimizing gene flow

**B. Assess and monitor potential effects on nontargeted organisms, that is, adapt and standardize methodologies to evaluate and develop strategies for minimizing effects of LMO on nontargeted organisms in the region**

**C. Strengthen technical capacity to understand and manage socioeconomic impact. That is, adapt methodologies and tools to incorporate socioeconomic considerations into decision-making on LMO-risk assessment in the tropics.**

**Component 2**

**Strengthening biosafety decision-making capacity**

Use knowledge generated by the Project through regional collaborative efforts to strengthen the capacity of authorities, professionals, technicians, and researchers in making decisions on risks to the environment and socioeconomic impact. The Project will promote participatory, scientific, and technical training on risk assessment, monitoring, management, and communication.

**Communications Project (MSP)**

**Complementary project: “Regional Communication and Public Awareness Capacity-Building for Compliance with the CPB”**

A smaller complementary project will also be conducted to reinforce capacity in communication and raising public awareness on biosafety in Latin America in general, and specifically in the four participating countries.

To achieve its objective, the project will lead the development of strategies in communication and public awareness, and plan for knowledge sharing. It will conclude by organizing a regional conference on biosafety.

Through its activities, the project will disseminate approaches and innovative tools for risk assessment, develop a database for sharing knowledge on biosafety, and conduct scientific training materials for the region.

These activities will generate global environmental benefits, and increase awareness and sensitivity to biosafety by sharing knowledge throughout the region. Thus, it will contribute to the conservation of biodiversity.