Report of the Knowledge Share Fair, 1-3 March 2010, Guadalajara, Mexico

The programme for the FAO international technical conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries (ABDC-10), which took place in Guadalajara, Mexico on 1-4 March 2010, is available at http://www.fao.org/biotech/abdc/prog/. For the first three days, there were plenary sessions in the morning followed by parallel sessions (sector-specific, regional or cross-cutting) in the afternoon and a **Knowledge Share Fair** in the evening.

The purpose of the Knowledge Share Fair was to promote good knowledge sharing practices in the field of agricultural biotechnologies (for crops, forestry, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, agro-industry) for rural development and food security, and to offer ABDC-10 participants a place to meet informally, discuss and share ideas, experiences, and information. There were 20 information booths available (including 1 table and 2 chairs per booth); 20 boards for posters (1 x 2.5 m); and 20 tables for information materials (leaflets, brochures, publications etc).

The possibility to use "Open Space", a method for suggesting an idea/theme and then convening small groups around a specific question, task or area of importance, was also provided to participants and Pierre Lagoda from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) availed of the opportunity to discuss the "Magic of mutation induction". This session was video recorded and webstreamed.

ABDC-10 participants were invited to submit proposals for the Share Fair and a total of 22 different organizations participated, including international and national research institutions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In their proposals, participants were requested to provide a title for their project or initiative as well as a short synopsis describing the proposal content. This information, when provided, as well as the names of the organizations involved, is given below.

Participants in the Knowledge Share Fair:

1. Harmonizing safety assessment of modern agricultural biotechnology products (environment, food and feed) – the OECD work

Synopsis: Developing countries face the safety assessment of modern agricultural biotechnology products, as genetically engineered crops are increasingly cultivated and derived foods marketed worldwide. Through intergovernmental cooperation, OECD aims to harmonize approaches and produces practical tools for risk/safety assessment of environmental and food/feed aspects ("Consensus Documents"), useful internationally.
Organization: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Organizational contact: Bertrand Dagallier, Administrator, Biosafety and Food Safety, OECD Environment, Health and Safety Division, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France. Bertrand.dagallier@oecd.org ; www.oecd.org/biotrack

2. A biosecurity based approach to biosafety - Developing policy and regulatory frameworks for risk assessment

Synopsis: The biosecurity-based approach is being internationally adopted for risk management of food safety issues, including ones related to biotechnologies. Risk assessment of new and emerging technologies is also an important area of work for sustainable development. This booth exhibits FAO's key activities and tools on biosecurity with examples from biotechnologies, nanotechnologies and response to food safety emergencies.
Organization: FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division
Organizational contact: Masami Takeuchi, Food Safety Officer (Assessment), FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy. Masami.Takeuchi@fao.org ; www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/

3. Benefits of plant biotechnology — Farmer stories from around the world

Synopsis: Since the first commercial plantings of biotech crops in 1996, farmers worldwide have enjoyed the benefits of plant biotechnology — from increased production and yield, to improved food quality from crops that are resistant to pests and viruses; from increased income, to reductions in the environmental impacts of agriculture; as well as more predictability and stability in crop production. This session enables participants to

hear stories from farmers themselves as they talk about the reasons for choosing biotech crops and the benefits they have reaped.
Organization: CropLife International
Organizational contact: Denise Dewar, CropLife International, Executive Director, Plant Biotechnology, c/o CropLife America Offices, 1156 15th Street, NW Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20005, United States of America. denise.dewar@croplife.org ; www.croplife.org

4. Providing quality, balanced information about agricultural biotechnologies

Synopsis: FAO's work in the area of agricultural biotechnologies is coordinated by its Working Group on Biotechnology, including representatives from FAO departments working on different aspects related to agricultural biotechnologies, including socio-economic, legal and agronomic issues, environmental and food safety, etc. in the livestock, crop, fishery, forestry and agro-industry sectors. A major role it plays is to provide FAO Members and their institutions with factual, comprehensive and current information on international developments relating to biotechnology applications.
Organization: FAO Working Group on Biotechnology
Organizational contact: Andrea Sonnino, Secretary, FAO Working Group on Biotechnology, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy. biotech-admin@fao.org ; www.fao.org/biotech/

5. Enhancing human capacity: Training and education in agriculture biotechnology

Synopsis: The ICGEB is an intergovernmental organization established within the United Nations system to provide the developing world with a centre of excellence for research and training in genetic engineering and biotechnology. Comprehensive information material will be available to promote the Centre's activities and to illustrate the opportunities for Member States.
Organization: International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)
Organizational contact: Decio Ripandelli, Director, Administration and External Relations, ICGEB, Padriciano 99, 34149 Trieste, Italy. decio@icgeb.org ; www.icgeb.org

6. Latin America: Multi-country capacity building for compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Synopsis: The objective is to participate to share the experiences of the pioneering initiative named LAC Biosafety Project. The project is an initiative for cooperation among mega bio diverse countries, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru, to strengthen their biosafety decision-making capacity for compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.
Organization: International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), World Bank, Global Environment Facility (GEF)
Organizational contact: Francisco J. Escobar, Communication Regional Thematic Leader, CIAT, Km. 17 Recta Cali Palmira, Palmira, Valle del Cauca, Colombia. f.j.escobar@cgiar.org ; www.lacbiosafety.org

7. Molecular market toolkit for food crop research

Synopsis: The Generation Challenge Programme of the CGIAR has developed a molecular marker toolkit, which aims to provide easy access to information on publicly available molecular markers ready for marker-assisted selection in 19 food security crops. The tool should be of particular use to developing country biotechnologists and plant breeders.
Organization: Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)
Organizational contact: Nathan Russell, Senior Communications Officer, c/o CIMMYT, Apdo. Postal 6-641, 06600 Mexico, D.F., Mexico. n.russell@cgiar.org ; www.generationcp.org/sp5/?da=09148937

8. Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS)

Synopsis: PBS supports the safe use of agricultural biotechnology through technical, policy and training advisory services. Our operational work is supported by IFPRI's policy analysis team to inform and empower decision making process. PBS will present our services and success stories in Africa and Asia (biosafety laws, first ever field trials).
Organization: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

Organizational contact: Catarina Cronquist, IFPRI, 2033 K. Street, NW, Washington DC 20006-1002, United States of America. c.cronquist@cgiar.org ; http://programs.ifpri.org/pbs/pbs.asp

9. The Enviropig™: Enhancing the sustainability of animal agriculture

Synopsis: Of all human activities, agriculture has imposed the largest negative impact on the global environment. This is clearly unsustainable. Among the tools of technology, advanced genetics methodologies offer the potential of transformative advances in environmental sustainability of animal agriculture. The Enviropig™ represents the first case of animal biotechnology directed at an environmental objective: namely reducing the environmental impact of animal agriculture. By reducing the dependence of monogastric animals such as swine and poultry on high-quality feed containing supplemental phosphorus, while at the same time reducing the pollution potential of animal waste, this technology stands as a model of environmental-genetic innovation with the potential to dramatically reduce the environmental footprint of animal agriculture throughout the world.
Organization: University of Guelph, Canada
Organizational contact: John P. Phillips, Professor Emeritus, Department of Molecular & Cellular Biology, SC 4443, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1, Canada. jphillip@uoguelph.ca ; www.uoguelph.ca/enviropig/

10. Biotech in Mexico

Synopsis: We present goals, on-going projects and some achievements in agro-biotechnologies in Mexico.
Organization: Seven national institutions participated, with one information booth each, i.e.

- Instituto Nacional de Investigaciones Forestales, Agrícolas y Pecuarias (INIFAP), Mexico
- Servicio Nacional de Inspección y Certificación de Semillas (SNICS), Mexico
- Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria (SENASICA), Mexico
- Centro de Investigación y Asistencia en Tecnología y Diseño del Estado de Jalisco (CIATEJ), Mexico
- Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politécnico Nacional (CINVESTAV), Mexico
- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico
- Colegio de Postgraduados (COLPOS), Mexico

Organizational contact: Fernando C. Gómez Merino, Director de Investigación, Colegio de Postgraduados, Mexico. dirinv@colpos.mx ; www.colpos.mx/

11. Biodiversity for a world without hunger – The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Synopsis: The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) is the main intergovernmental forum dealing with biological diversity for food and agriculture, aiming to reach international consensus on policies for the sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use.

Organization: FAO, CGRFA.
Organizational contact: Eva Hain, Associate Professional Officer, Secretariat of the CGRFA, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome 00153, Italy. eva.hain@fao.org ; www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/en/

12. Untitled

Organization: The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
Organizational contact: Alvaro Toledo, Secretariat of the ITPGRFA, c/o FAO, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome 00153, Italy. alvaro.toledo@fao.org ; www.planttreaty.org/

13. Untitled

Organization: Confederacion Nacional Campesina de Indigenas y Productores Rurales AC (CNCINPRO)
Organizational contact: Rosa Maria Armendariz Muñoz, Presidenta Nacional, CNCINPRO, Puebla 302 – 601 Col. Roma, Delegacion Cuauhtemoc C.P. 06700, Mexico City, Mexico. cncinpro_ac@yahoo.com.mx

14. Untitled

Organization: Instituto de Innovación en Biotecnología e Industria (IIBI), República Dominicana
Organizational contact: Bernarda Altagracia Castillo, Directora Esecutiva, IIBI, Av. Núñez de Caceres Esq. Oloff Palme, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana. bcastillo@iibi.gov.do ; www.iibi.gov.do/

15. Untitled

Organization: Institute of Plant Biotechnology for Developing Countries (IPBO)
Organizational contact: Dulce De Oliveira, IPBO, Department of Molecular Genetics, Ghent University, Ledeganckstraat 35, 9000 Gent, Belgium. Dulce.deOliveira@UGent.be ; www.ugent.be/we/genetics/ipbo/en