



NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
Agence de Planification et de Coordination du NEPAD

ABNE | African Biosafety Network of Expertise

A science-based biosafety resource network for African regulators



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2012 ABNE Regulators and Scientists Forum

The second biennial ABNE forum for regulators and scientists came off on September 26, 2012, in Arusha, Tanzania. Some 40 African biosafety regulators and scientists selected from ABNE focus countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda) participated. The forum served as a platform for constructive dialogue between African regulators and scientists to clarify roles and responsibilities within the biosafety system and to share experiences and analyze emerging challenges and opportunities in biotechnology research and development as well as in biosafety. Participants noted the cordial and forthright spirit with which the discourse was held as laying the foundation for future cooperation. They also noted that such cooperation was required for biosafety regulation to ensure both an adequate level of safety and access to new products that will benefit local communities.



Participants at ABNE's regulators and scientists forum in Arusha, Tanzania, September 26, 2012.

Ghana makes steady progress towards the development of a biosafety communication strategy

Recognizing effective communication increases stakeholders' awareness and enhances their involvement and support for biosafety processes and the need for further capacity building, the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MEST), requested assistance from NEPAD Agency ABNE to assist in addressing the nation's communication capacity needs. Subsequently, a two-day training was organized to strengthen biosafety communication capacity in Ghana and was attended by twenty-nine participants drawn from the National Biosafety Committee (NBC), public relations officers from stakeholder government ministries and the media. At the end of the training, participants indicated having gained in-depth knowledge in the principles and practice of biosafety communication. Another key outcome was the initiation of processes for developing a national communication plan. The communication plan will ensure enhanced public understanding and improved quality of public participation in decision-making and policy development regarding issues of biotechnology management and biosafety.



Participants at the training to strengthen biosafety communication capacity in Ghana, August 21 – 22, 2012 at Coconut Groove Regency Hotel, Accra.

ABNE Services and Upcoming Events (November – December 2012)

November 5 – 6, 2012: Training to strengthen regulatory capacity of institutional biosafety committees in Nigeria. Target group: regulators and scientists in institutions conducting confined field trials. Venue: Abuja, Nigeria. For more information, contact: sam.timpo@nepadbiosafety.net **(Status: Confirmed)**

November 7 – 9, 2012: Training to strengthen biosafety communication capacity in Nigeria. Target group: regulators, scientists, media and public relations officers in government ministries. Venue: Abuja, Nigeria. For more information, contact: sam.timpo@nepadbiosafety.net **(Status: Confirmed)**

November 13 – 17, 2012: Building Decision-Making Capacity for Commercialization of Genetically Modified Crops in Kenya. Venue: Mombasa. For more

information, contact: b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net **(Status: Confirmed)**

November 18 – 23, 2012: Biosafety study tour to Burkina Faso. Target group: Tanzanian policy and decision makers. For more information, contact: b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net or moussa.savadogo@nepadbiosafety.net **(Status: Confirmed)**

December 1 – 9, 2012: Biotechnology/Biosafety scoping exercise in Ethiopia. A collaboration with the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) **(Status: Confirmed)**

December 11 – 13, 2012: Training to strengthen regulatory capacity of national and institutional biosafety committees in Uganda. For more information, contact: b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net **(Status: Confirmed)**

Quote from an African Regulator

“ABNE’s biosafety internship programme and training workshops have enabled me grow in knowledge and competence in regulating biotechnology. I am now a more effective communicator and better able to explain regulatory mandate and processes, safety assessment of the technology and its products, and myths and misperceptions.”



Mrs. Hauwa Tahir Ahmed

Biosafety Unit, Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria

Information Resources

Visit www.nepadbiosafety.net for:

- Guidance on regulatory processes
- Policy briefs on environmental biosafety, food safety, socio-economics and legal aspects of biosafety.
- Manuals on biosafety administration, inspection and communication
- Information on biotechnology and biosafety issues

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