

**SEVENTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
of
ASIA-PACIFIC CONSORTIUM ON AGRICULTURAL
BIOTECHNOLOGY
(APCoAB)**

6 June 2007

Venue:
National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi

PROCEEDINGS



C/o ICRISAT Delhi Office, CG Centres Block,
National Agriculture Science Complex
Dev Prakash Shastri Marg
Pusa Campus, New Delhi – 110 012

**Proceedings of the Seventh Steering Committee Meeting of Asia-Pacific
Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology
6 June 2007
National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi**

1. Introduction and Welcome

The Seventh Steering Committee Meeting of APCoAB was held on 6th June 2007 at National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Chairman, APAARI and attended by eight Steering Committee members and special invitees (Annexure I). Prof. H.P.M. Gunasena, Dr. Jerry Flint and Dr. Randy Hautea regretted their inability to attend while Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa represented Dr. Adisak Sreesunpagit, Director General, DOA, Thailand and Mr. Gopi Ghosh, FAO, India represented Mr. Malcolm Hazelman, Senior Extension, Education and Communication Officer, FAO-RAP.

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake opened the meeting by welcoming the participants of the Steering Committee and suggested that the meeting would be crucial aimed at taking stock of the progress, problems, and opportunities and also in deciding immediate to medium-term future of the consortium. He recalled the basis and rationale for establishing APCoAB by APAARI and FAO in December 2003 and highlighted the purpose of promoting application of agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region. This is to be accomplished by serving as a neutral forum, creating public awareness and developing human resources. He thanked the several organizations in public and private sectors, and national and international agencies for their contributions so far to APCoAB activities. He commended the efforts of the Consortium over the recent years in spite of constrained resource condition, limited time and human resources. Such accomplishments included high-level policy dialogue, various publications and training workshops.

Dr. Ghodake emphasized the need to undertake an internal assessment of the Consortium so that the Consortium remains relevant and finds its niche in the region, grows to a minimal optimal level within next two years, and sustains its activities for further development. He pointed out three important issues that need addressing and these are: 1) how to strengthen APCoAB in terms of resources and program activities; 2) any need for re-prioritization considering emerging issues and past experiences; and 3) need for minimum assured core budget. This would allow the Consortium to have a breathing space, synergize and develop as an independent and sustainable program on its own. He concluded his statement by thanking the members for their participation.

Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI, extended his welcome to the Steering Committee members and the special invitees. He expressed his happiness over the participation of Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa in the meeting as this would open new avenues for collaboration with DOA, Thailand. Dr. Paroda also welcomed Mr. Raju

Barwale as a special invitee to the meeting, recalling with appreciation the support provided by MAHYCO to APCoAB during the last three years. He mentioned that APCoAB had come a long way since its inception and is now poised to play a significant role in biotechnology promotion in the region in partnership with other organizations. While some support for APCoAB activities is forthcoming, more funding support is required which could be possible from GFAR and through collaborative activities with ICAR and ICRISAT. In this regard, Dr. Paroda thanked Dr. William Dar and Dr. Mangala Rai for providing full support to APCoAB. Dr. Paroda also expressed his appreciation of FAO for its continuing support and welcomed Mr. Gopi Ghosh to the meeting.

2. Adoption of Proceeding of VI Steering Committee Meeting

The proceedings of the VI Steering Committee Meeting were put up to the VII Steering Committee. These were unanimously approved. The agenda of the VII Steering Committee meeting was also put up for approval. This was also unanimously adopted.

3. Action Taken Report

Dr. J.L. Karihaloo, Coordinator, APCoAB apprised the Steering Committee about the actions taken on the decisions of the VI Steering Committee meeting:

1. Biosafety acts/regulations/guidelines of 36 countries of Asia-Pacific have been compiled and are presently under review by the National Biosafety Focal Points.
2. Brainstorming session on “Models of Public-Private Partnership in Agricultural Biotechnology” was organized at National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi on 7th April 2007. Its proceedings are under compilation.
3. Training program on “Low-cost gene-based technologies for MAS application in rice and maize” was held on 25-27 April 2007 at Barwale Knowledge and Study Centre in collaboration with IRRI, CIMMYT, GCP, and Barwale Foundation.
4. “Micropropagation for Production of Quality Potato Seed in Asia-Pacific” was published during the period under report.
5. Resource generation and collaboration activities:
 - (i) The Executive Secretary sent a number of letters to Dr. Jerry Flint and Dr. Eric Johnson of Monsanto emphasizing the need for Monsanto to fulfill its commitment. Coordinator, APCoAB sent an activity sheet for 2007 and also requested Dr. Flint to identify priority activities to be pursued by APCoAB. The issue is still unresolved and needed attention.
 - (ii) Meeting was held with Ms Barbara Parr, Biotechnology Acceptance Manager, CROPLIFE for collaborations/funding support on common programs. While an assurance of working with APCoAB was given, further concrete action is yet to be taken by CROPLIFE.
 - (iii) Invitations were sent to biosafety experts/National Focal Points of 12 countries in the Asia-Pacific region for their cooperation in developing a collaborative project to be submitted to UNEP or other international organizations. While no commitment was received from any of NFPs, a Concept Note has been submitted to Ministry of Environment and

- Forests, Govt. of India for UNEP support to a program on dissemination of information on biosafety in the Asia-Pacific region.
- (iv) A proposal was submitted to Rockefeller Foundation for extension of support to APCoAB beyond 2006. It was informed that due to changed priorities of the Foundation, further support would not be possible.
 - (v) Syngenta Foundation granted support for organizing training program on MAS. Collaboration has been sought with IRRI and ICRISAT for developing a collaborative project on MAS to be submitted to the Foundation.
 - (vi) A proposal has been submitted to National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources for organizing a training program on Biotechnology for Genetic Resources Conservation.

4. Recent Progress (November 2006-June 2007):

1. Report entitled “Micropropagation for Production of Quality Potato Seed in Asia-Pacific” was compiled and published. The report includes information on (i) Potato seed production in Asia-Pacific, (ii) Micropropagation techniques for virus-free meristem culture, microtuber and minituber production, (iii) integration of micropropagation in seed production system, and (iv) prospects of potato micropropagation for quality seed production in Asia-Pacific. The publication also gives detailed requirements for establishing a tissue culture laboratory and step-wise protocols for potato micropropagation. The publication has been distributed among APAARI members and other relevant organizations and is also uploaded on the APCoAB website (www.apcoab.org).
2. The manuscript of “Micropropagation of Sugarcane” was revised by Coordinator, APCoAB and was submitted for comments of experts. Based on the comments received, the manuscript has been sent to the authors for final revision.
3. The manuscript of “Status Report on Bt cotton in China” has been submitted recently by the authors.
4. Brainstorming Session on “Models of Public-Private Partnership in Agricultural Biotechnology” was held at National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, Pusa, New Delhi on 7 April 2007. The meeting was attended by 45 agriculture policy planners, science managers and biotechnology experts from public and private sectors and CG Centres. Presentations were made and discussions were held on three main topics of the brainstorming session: I. Existing Models of Public-Private Partnership; II. Issues in Public-Private Partnership; III. The way ahead. Draft proceedings of the meeting have been compiled.
5. Training Workshop on “Low-cost gene-based technologies for MAS application in rice and maize” was held at Barwale Knowledge and Study Centre, Jalna, India

in collaboration with IRII, CIMMYT, GCP and Barwale Foundation. The three day program held from 25 to 27 April 2007, comprised lectures and practical classes on modern techniques in marker aided selection, allele mining, PCR-ELISA and bioinformatics. APCoAB sponsored three trainees from VAAS, Vietnam; ICAR, India; and DoA, Thailand. Trainees from CNRRI, China; CAAS China; PhilRice, Phillipines; and ICERI, Indonesia were sponsored by other agencies.

6. The status paper on Biosafety Regulations of the Asia-Pacific countries is nearing completion. The information compiled from various sources has been sent to respective country Biosafety Focal Points for authentication and replies have been received from several of them.
7. Information is being compiled on agricultural biotechnology institutes of the Asia-Pacific region on a pattern similar to “APAARI on CD”. A list of about 700 institutes with addresses, contact email ids and websites has been prepared.
8. APCoAB website has been updated on a regular basis. News and Events page is updated weekly focusing on current developments in agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region. During November 2006 – June 2007, 240 news items pertaining to 31 countries were posted on the website.

5. Work Plan for June – November 2007

Following work plan is proposed

1. Compilation of success story/Status Report on “Micropropagation of sugarcane”.
2. Publication of “Highlights and Recommendations of Brainstorming Session on Models of Public- Private Partnership in Agricultural Biotechnology”.
3. Publication of “Biosafety Regulations in the Asia-Pacific Countries”.
4. Compilation of database on “Agricultural Biotechnology Institutes of the Asia-Pacific Region”.
5. Regular updating of APCoAB website with current news and events, publications etc.
6. Organization of meeting on “Conventional Biotechnologies and their Adoption by Resource-poor Farmers in the Asia-Pacific and Other Regions”. The meeting is proposed to be held in Thailand subject to funding support by GFAR..

6. Audited Accounts for 2006 and Estimates of Income/Expenditures for 2007:

The audited accounts statement of APCoAB for January to December 2006 was presented to the Steering Committee (Annexure II). The committee examined the

statement and unanimously endorsed the audited statement. The proposed budget statement for 2007 was also discussed.

General Discussion and Recommendations

Following the presentation of Action Taken Report and Recent Progress, the Chairman invited comments from the participants regarding the progress made, the future priorities and long-term sustainability of the Consortium. Dr. William Dar, Dr. Mangala Rai, Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa, Mr. Raju Barwale and Mr. Gopi Ghosh actively participated in the ensuing discussions.

Dr. William Dar suggested some new topics for future APCoAB publications depending upon their importance in the region. These include, public bred crop varieties through marker-aided selection, virus resistant papaya. He also suggested publication of brief fact sheets on current issues and developments in agricultural biotechnology. ICAR and other national agencies need to be approached for funding support.

Dr. Mangala Rai informed the committee about the initiatives taken by ICAR to promote biotechnology research and development including development of new varieties in rice and pearl millet through marker-aided selection, transgenics in 14 priority crops and marker-aided selection for disease resistance, salinity and drought tolerance and root growth. He expressed the need to include brief guidelines on what to do, why to do, how to do and what not to do in the publications. He expressed his full support for bringing out publication on biosafety regulations in Asia-Pacific region.

Dr. Raj Paroda informed the Committee that the Asian NGO, Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) was earlier invited to join the APCoAB Steering Committee as the NGO representative. However, the organization had declined the offer. Since NGOs have an important role in the farmer and consumer level acceptance of biotechnology products, he requested Dr. William Dar to persuade ANGOC to join as member of APCoAB Steering Committee. He further requested Dr. Dar to extend secretarial support to APCoAB.

Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa expressed her full satisfaction in the progress made by APCoAB and the discussions held during the meeting. She informed about the training programs on biotechnology and biosafety organized by DoA, Thailand and offered to support participation of trainees for the Asia-Pacific region in their programs.

Mr. Raju Barwale briefed about the efforts being made by the private sector in supplying high quality Bt cotton seed to the farmers at affordable prices. He committed continuing support of USD 5,000 to APCoAB for further three years beginning 2007.

Dr. Gopi Ghosh apprised the committee about the UN 'Solution Exchange' program, which provides a forum for exchange of opinions and information on contemporary issues, including these of food and nutritional security. One of the recent activities of

Solution Exchange was compilation of experiences on Impact of Bt Cotton in India. He invited membership of APCoAB to the forum.

Following decisions were taken:

1. The Steering Committee expressed satisfaction over the progress made during the six months under report and it was unanimously felt that APCoAB was well poised to play a significant role in biotechnology promotion in the region.
2. The Work Plan for June - November 2007 was approved.
3. It was unanimously resolved to reconstitute the Steering Committee:
 - (i) Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Chairman, APAARI
 - (ii) Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI
 - (iii) Dr. Mangala Rai
 - (iv) Dr. William Dar
 - (v) Dr. Adisak Sreesunpagit
 - (vi) Mr. Malcolm Hazelman
 - (vii) Dr. Raju Barwale
 - (viii) Dr. Abdelmajid Slama
 - (ix) Dr. Randy A. Hautea
4. The compilation on biosafety regulations of Asia-Pacific region should be brought out in three months. Besides the details, essential elements of regulations should be given in a matrix form and a brief synthesis of the information included in this compilation. This publication should help the Consortium in pursuing the UNEP funding proposal.
5. Including more information about APAARI/APCoAB in APCoAB publications can enhance their value and informativeness. The publications on methodologies should include brief notes on what to do, why to do, how to do, and what not to do.
6. Besides status reports and success stories, APCoAB should bring out fact sheets and information bulletins on conventional and modern biotechnologies, including marker-aided selection.
7. The database on agricultural biotechnology institutes of the Asia-Pacific region should also include information on institutes, personnel and programs pertaining to animal sector.
8. Topics identified for new publications: i) Virus resistant papaya; and ii) Tissue culture propagation in orchids. Advice should be sought from Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa regarding resource persons for writing the success stories.

9. Efforts need to be continued for raising resources to make APCoAB sustainable on long-term basis. National funding agencies like ICAR, MoEF and international agencies should be approached for this purpose.
10. Dr. Mangala Rai suggested that DBT had agreed to provide support to a number of components of APCoAB activities, which needs to be pursued further. Mr. Raju Barwale offered help in release of pending contribution from Monsanto.
11. Revised budget for 2007 and estimated budget for 2008 should be prepared after incorporating the committed funding and expected funding and anticipated expenses so as to have an assessment of the future funding needs. (Revised budget for 2007 is given in Annexures III, while estimated budget for 2008 will be developed over next two months by considering likely activities and funding possibilities and will be made available to the APAARI Executive Committee meeting in October 2007).

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by the chair to the participants.

Annexure I



List of participants in VII Steering Committee Meeting

<p>Dr. Raghunath Ghodake Chairman, APAARI & Director General National Agricultural Research Institute Sri Alkan Tololo Research Centre P.O. Box 4415, Lae 411 Morobe Province</p> <p>E-mail: raghunath.ghodake@nari.org.pg</p>	<p>Dr. Mangala Rai Secretary (DARE) & DG (ICAR) Krishi Bhawan, ICAR, New Delhi-110001</p> <p>E-mail: mrailicar@nic.in</p>
<p>Dr. William D. Dar Director General ICRISAT, Patancheru Andhra Pradesh-502324</p> <p>E-mail: w.dar@cgiar.org</p>	<p>Dr. (Ms.) Supranee Impithuksa Deputy Director-General Department of Agriculture Thailand</p> <p>Email: supranee@doa.go.th</p>
<p>Mr. Raju Barwale Managing Director Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Co. Ltd. Resham Bhawan, 4th Floor 78 Veer Nariman Road, Mumbai 400 020</p> <p>Email: raju.barwale@mahyco.com</p>	<p>Mr. Gopi Ghosh Asstt. FAO Representative FAO, India</p> <p>Email: Gopi.Ghosh@fao.org</p>
<p>Dr. R.S. Paroda Executive Secretary, APAARI & Assistant Director General (International Cooperation) ICARDA, P.O. Box 5466, Aleppo, Syria</p> <p>E-mail: raj.paroda@cgiar.org</p>	<p>Dr. J. L. Karihaloo Coordinator, APCoAB National Agriculture Science Complex Dev Prakash Shastri Marg (Near Todapur) Pusa, New Delhi –110012</p> <p>Email: j.karihaloo@cgiar.org</p>

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Asian Pacific Confederation of
APCOAB
 Agricultural Producers Organization
SUMMARY ACCOUNT STATEMENT OF APCOAB
 01 January – 31 December 2006
 (Amount in US Dollars)

ITEMS	RECEIVED	DISBURSEMENTS		BALANCE
		Budget	Actual Used	
1. Contributions	88,256.73			88,256.73
2. Interest Income	1,922.62			1,922.62
3. Other Income:				
3.1 Refund	797.73			797.73
3.2 Re-transferred to APAARI	-5,000.00			-5,000.00
4. Secretarial Support:		25,000.00	132.14	24,867.86
4.1 Office Stationery & Office equipment			7,140.50	17,727.36
4.2 Miscellaneous / Communication			1,456.85	16,280.51
5. Publications		10,000.00	1,456.85	8,543.15
6. Consultants		40,000.00	33,350.01	6,649.99
7. Travel		15,000.00	6,975.47	8,024.53
8. Training		20,000.00		20,000.00
9. Meetings		50,000.00		50,000.00
9.1 Expenses of Steering Com/General/High Level Meetings			32,067.30	17,932.70
TOTAL	85,887.88	180,000.00	81,692.37	57,834.89

Total amount in BKK office:
 Total amount in New Delhi office:

US\$ 46,559.78
 US\$ 10,475.11

Grand Total:

US\$ 57,834.89

[Signature]
 Dr. Rajendra
 Executive Secretary, APAARI

[Signature]
 Mr. Lakshaj Rajjick
 Accountant, APAARI

[Signature]
 Mr. Ramesh Chandra
 External Auditor

Annexure III**APCoAB Budget for 2007 (1-1-2007 to 31-12-2007)**

ITEMS	Receipts (USD)	Expected expenditure (USD)
Amount B/F	57,034.89	
1. Contributions		
1.1 APAARI	20,000	
1.2 ACIAR	10,000	
1.3 FAO (committed)	7,500	
1.4 Mahyco	5,000	
1.5 GFAR (expected)	20,000	
2. Retransferred from APAARI	3,229.13	
3. Secretarial Support:		10,000.00
3.1 Office Stationery & Office Equipment		
3.2 Miscellaneous/Communication		
4. Publications		
4.1 SSA		3,000
4.2 Printing and postage		7,000
5. Consultancy		36,000.00
6. Travel		5,000.00
7. Training		5,000.00
8. Meetings		5,000.00
8.1 Expenses of Steering Com./General Meetings		
TOTAL	1,22,764.02	71,000.00
	Expected balance on 1-1-2008	\$51,764.02