



Terms of Reference

Internship on Synthetic Biology: Consideration of the impacts of components, organisms and products resulting from synthetic biology techniques on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

Background

The Convention on Biological Diversity was signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992 and entered into force in 1993. It is the first global agreement to cover all aspects of biological diversity: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, based in Montreal, Canada, was established to support the goals of the Convention. Its primary functions are to assist member governments in the implementation of various programmes of work, coordinate with other international organizations and collect and disseminate information.

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice has been established through [Article 25 of the Convention](#). In accordance with [decision VIII/10](#), annex III, appendix A, paragraph (d), one of the specific functions of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice is to identify new and emerging issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The procedure for identifying new and emerging issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity has been laid out in section II of [decision IX/29](#).

In [decision XI/11](#), the Conference of the Parties requested a number of activities to be undertaken on the impacts of synthetic biology on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and in [decision XI/27](#) the Conference of the Parties called for information on relevant definitions of relevant key terms related to biofuels and biodiversity.

Responsibilities

Under the guidance of the Principal Officer for Scientific Technical and Technological Matters and under the direct supervision of the Environmental Affairs Officer, Scientific Assessments, the incumbent will:

1. Compile and synthesize relevant available information, together with the accompanying information from the process of submitting proposals for new and emerging issues under the Convention, on the potential positive and negative impacts of components, organisms and products resulting from synthetic biology techniques on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;



Convention on
Biological Diversity

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2. Consider possible gaps and overlaps with the applicable provisions of the Convention, its Protocols and other relevant agreements related to components, organisms and products resulting from synthetic biology techniques;

3. Prepare a synthesis of the above information, including an analysis of how the criteria set out in paragraph 12 of decision IX/29 apply to this issue;

4. Compile information on relevant definitions of relevant key terms on biofuels and biodiversity, to enable Parties to implement decisions IX/2 and X/37.

Competencies

- Professionalism: Good understanding of, and interest in, environmental issues and of the political and regulatory mechanisms governing the environment;
- Planning and organization: Strong research and organizational skills;
- Respect for diversity: Good interpersonal skills including the ability to establish and maintain effective partnerships and working relationships in a multi-cultural environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity;

Languages

- Fluency in English with excellent writing skills;
- Fluency in the other official languages of the United Nations is an asset.

Application

Interested applicants are encouraged to complete an internship application form (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/vacancies/frm-scbd-intern-en.doc>) and to send it along with a copy their curriculum vitae and a cover letter to secretariat@cbd.int.

Please note

- Eligibility criteria are accessible at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/vacancies/scbd-intern-req-en.pdf>
- Internships with the UN are not remunerated and all the expenses connected with it must be borne by the intern or by the sponsoring institution or government;
- There is no expectancy of employment at the end of the internship; and the UN accepts no responsibility for accidents and/or illness incurred during the intern's stay;
- That the UN does not deal with immigration authorities in Canada and, therefore, the intern is responsible for obtaining any necessary visas on his/her own.
- Our Internship Programme has a minimum duration of three months and a maximum of six months. This Internship opportunity will start on January 2013.