

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

28 FEBRUARY 2008

Venue:
National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi

PROCEEDINGS



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

**Proceedings of the Eighth Steering Committee Meeting
of
Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology
28 February 2008
National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi**

1. Introduction and Welcome

The Eighth Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology (APCoAB) was held on 28th February, 2008 at the National Agricultural Science Centre Complex, New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Chairman, APAARI and attended by seven Steering Committee Members or their representatives (Annexure-I). Dr. Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary, GFAR and Dr. Malcolm Hazelman, Sr. Extension, Education and Communication Officer, FAO, RAP, Bangkok FAO could not attend due to other commitments while Dr. William Dar, DG, ICRISAT was represented by Dr. David Hoisington, Global Theme Leader, GT-Biotechnology, ICRISAT; and Ms. Metanee Sukontarug, DG, DoA, Thailand was represented by Dr. Karsedis Distabanjong, Senior Plant Biotechnologist, DoA; whereas Dr. Randy A. Hautea, Global Coordinator, ISAAA, was represented by Mr. Bhagirath Choudhary, Indian National Coordinator, ISAAA.

Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Chairman, welcomed the members and thanked them for attending the meeting. He highlighted the efforts made by APCoAB in promoting agricultural biotechnology applications relevant to stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. The recent APCoAB publications on micropropagation of potato and sugarcane and training programs on marker-aided-selection have been widely appreciated and these have increased the visibility of APCoAB. He made special mention of the three-year funding support of US\$ 105,000 announced by Council of Agriculture, Taipei for a collaborative project with APAARI, particularly for APCoAB activities. The activities to be undertaken include organization of policy dialogues, capacity building and information dissemination on agricultural biotechnology in the AP region. Dr. Ghodake expressed the need to mobilize more resources and develop regional collaborations for expanding the role of APCoAB in assisting member countries to fully benefit from new technologies. He further elaborated the recent focus on agriculture and biotechnology as highlighted in the 2008 world development report. Therefore there is a real opportunity to find a niche for biotechnology and this needs to be explored by APCoAB.

He thanked the national and international organizations, especially ICAR, DoA, Thailand and ICRISAT for extending both material and moral support to APCoAB. He also expressed his appreciation of the continued support given by Mahyco, while pointing to the pending contribution of Monsanto for 2006 committed earlier by them.

Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary, APAARI welcomed the SC members and special invitees and thanked them for their participation and support to the Consortium. He made special mention of the support provided by Dr. William Dar, DG, ICRISAT in hosting the APCoAB secretariat. Dr. Paroda also expressed his appreciation of Dr. Mangala Rai for

providing full support to APCoAB and hosting a number of APAARI meetings. He welcomed Dr. Karsedis Distabanjong, representative of DG, DoA, Thailand for attending the meeting. Dr. Paroda recalled the four main strategic areas of APCoAB functioning: policy advocacy, research promotion, capacity building and knowledge dissemination, and briefly explained the work done by APCoAB in each of them. While appreciating the progress made by the consortium, he expressed the need to lay major efforts on policy issues of biosafety, germplasm exchange, IPR and resource generation.

Dr. Mangala Rai expressed satisfaction over the recent progress made by APCoAB and committed continued support for its activities. He commended Dr J. Karihaloo for his efforts, commitment and perseverance in enhancing the contribution of the consortium. Dr. Hoisington conveyed the message of Dr. William Dar to continue extending full support to APCoAB. Mr. Raju Barwale and Dr. Distabanjong expressed similar views and were impressed of the outcomes.

2. Adoption of Proceedings of VII Steering Committee Meeting

The proceedings of the VII SC Meeting were unanimously approved. The agenda of the SC meeting was also unanimously adopted.

3. Action Taken Report

Dr. J.L. Karihaloo, Coordinator, APCoAB apprised the Committee on various actions taken on the decisions/resolutions of the VII Steering Committee meeting:

1. The decision regarding reconstitution of SC was circulated to all the Committee members. The item was also placed before the Executive Committee of APAARI in its meeting held on 10 October 2007 at ICRISAT, Hyderabad and the reconstitution was endorsed.
2. The compilation on biosafety regulations was complete and would be sent to the press soon. As recommended, the essential elements of the regulations had been given in a tabular form and a brief synthesis was also included.
3. As suggested by the SC, more information about APAARI/APCoAB has been included in the recent publications. The publication on Sugarcane Micropropagation also includes notes on Do's and Don'ts.
4. During the period under report, APCoAB brought out a fact-sheet entitled: "HHB 67-Improved – the first product of marker-assisted crop breeding in India".
5. The database on agricultural biotechnology institutions of Asia-Pacific countries has been revised to include information on animal sector also.
6. Consequent to the consent of Dr. (Ms.) Supralee Impithuksa, DDG, DoA, Thailand to write status reports on virus resistant papaya and tissue culture propagation in orchids, a letter requesting nomination of resource persons from Thailand for writing the reports was sent. However, no response has been received as yet.

7. Proposals for funding support and collaborative projects have been made to a number of agencies. These are detailed below under **Recent Progress**.
8. As recommended, revised budget estimate was prepared and circulated with proceeding of the VII Steering Committee to the members.

4. Recent Progress (July 2007 – January 2008):

1. Report entitled “Micropropagation for Quality Seed Production in Sugarcane in Asia and the Pacific” has been compiled and is currently under print. It includes chapters on: (i) Conventional sugarcane seed production, (ii) Micropropagation for sugarcane seed production, and (iii) Prospects of sugarcane micropropagation for quality seed production in Asia-Pacific.
2. A compilation on “Biosafety Regulations in Asia-Pacific Countries” has been completed and shall be sent for printing soon. The document includes information on laws, regulations, rules and guidelines governing research, environmental release, import and export of transgenic crops in Asia-Pacific countries.
3. During the reporting period, highlights and recommendations of the Brainstorming Session on Public-Private-Partnership in Agricultural Biotechnology held by APCoAB in April 2007 were published. The publication includes recommendations on (i) Models of Public-Private-Partnership, (ii) Policy, and (iii) Capacity Building.
4. The manuscript of report commissioned by APCoAB “Status Report of Transgenic cotton in China” was received from the authors and has been reviewed. Expert comments on the manuscript along with suggestions and a set of important publications on the subject have been sent to the authors for revision.
5. APCoAB was invited by AARINENA to make a presentation of its progress in the FAO-AARINENA Expert Consultation Meeting on Regional Agricultural Biotechnology Networks held in Cairo on 15-16 December 2007. It was also decided to jointly approach GFAR for funding support for two proposed activities during 2008: i) Bioinformatics Training Course to be held by AARINENA biotechnology network in Egypt, and ii) Expert Consultations in Biotechnology and Biosafety to be held by APCoAB in Malaysia.
6. APCoAB website is updated on a regular basis with News and Events page revised every week. The database on agricultural research institutions of the Asia-Pacific region has been revised to include animal sciences related institutions, and mandates/research areas of each institute.
7. A new e-News Service on agricultural biotechnology has been initiated to provide wide circulation to information on significant developments in agricultural biotechnology in the Asia-Pacific region. The first release was entitled “HHB67-Improved – The First Product of Marker Assisted Crop Breeding in India”. All APAARI members have been invited to send similar success stories for wide circulations.

8. Following proposals for collaboration/funding support with concept notes were submitted to various agencies:

Collaboration/funding support	Program
Council of Agriculture, Taipei	(i) Policy Dialogues to promote modern biotechnology in Asia-Pacific. (ii) Training of scientist from APAARI member institutions on virus-free plants/seedlings production of fruit crops. (iii) Training of scientist from APAARI member institutions on biotechnological tools for agrobiodiversity conservation. (iv) Publication of success stories and strengthening of APCoAB knowledge sharing efforts.
IRRI, Philippines	Training program on “Marker aided selection for rice improvement”.
MARDI, Malaysia	Expert Consultation on Biotechnology and Biosafety.
MoEF, India	Group Meeting for Policy Makers on “Public Awareness on Transgenic Crops and Biosafety Issues”.
ICAR/NBPGR, India	Regional Training Course on “Biotechnological Tools for Conservation and Use of Plant Genetic Resources”
ICAR/NAIP, India	Project “Public-Private Partnership in Agricultural Biotechnology in South And South-East Asia – Some Case Studies”

Council of Agriculture, Taipei has advised its approval of the project proposal and committed a funding support of US\$ 35,000 per year for three years beginning 2008.

9. Coordinator, APCoAB assisted APAARI in its following activities during the reporting period:

- (i) Organization of Expert Consultation Meeting on Research Networks/Consortia
- (ii) Compilation and publication of proceedings of the above consultation.
- (iii) Compilation of APAARI Newsletter December 2007.

5. Work Plan for 2008

Following work plan was discussed in the meeting and approved:

(a) Publications

- (i) Success Stories:
 - Sugarcane Tissue Culture
 - Banana Tissue Culture
 - Bt Cotton in China
- (ii) Special Report on Biosafety Regulations of Asia-Pacific Countries.
- (iii) CDs: Agricultural Biotechnology Research Institutes of Asia-Pacific Region.

(b) Website development and regular updating of (i) News and Events, and (ii) Agricultural Biotechnology Institutions in the Asia-Pacific region.

(c) Meetings:

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|-----|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (i) | APCoAB Steering Committee Meeting | February, Delhi |
| | | October, Japan (if needed) |

(d) Expert Consultation:

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| (i) | Biotechnology & Biosafety | August, MARDI, Malaysia |
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6. Audited Accounts for 2007 and Estimates of Income/Expenditure for 2008

The audited accounts statement of APCoAB for January to December 2007 was presented to the Steering Committee (Annexure II). The Committee examined the statement and unanimously endorsed the audited statement. The proposed budget for 2008 was discussed and approved.

7. General Discussion and Recommendations

Following the presentation of Action Taken Report and Recent Progress, the Chairman invited comments from the participants. Dr. Mangala Rai, Dr. David Hoisington and Mr. Raju Barwale alongwith others actively participated in the discussion.

Dr. Mangala Rai informed the Committee about the new initiatives taken by ICAR on international collaborations and capacity building in new technologies. These include collaborative research projects with Australian institutes on rust, salinity and drought resistance in wheat and training programs on marker-aided-selection at IARI. He also informed that micropropagation technology for quality seed production in potato, on which APCoAB has recently published a status report, is being implemented in an aggressive manner.

Mr. Raju Barwale appreciated the initiatives taken in highlighting public-private participation in agricultural biotechnology. He informed the Committee about the status of pending Monsanto contribution and assured of pursuing the matter further.

Dr. Hoisington made a number of suggestions to expand the out reach of APCoAB web-based information dissemination activities and avoid duplication of similar efforts made by other organizations. He suggested to develop a system for assessing the use of APCoAB website by target audience. The weekly news updates, besides being posted on the website, may also be distributed through mail.

Dr. Distabanjong informed that due to the retirement of Dr. (Mrs.) Supranee Impithuksa, former DDG from DoA, Thailand, the earlier request of APCoAB regarding resource persons for writing status reports as committed by her could not be followed up. He assured that the proposal would now be pursued by him.

Dr. Raj Paroda emphasized the need for conducting the media awareness programs in which Indian and International panel of experts should be involved. He also suggested seeking advice of experts for improving the presentation and reach of APCoAB website. There is also a need to outsource some part of biotechnology database compilation work since information about countries like China is not readily available.

Following decisions were taken:

1. The Steering Committee expressed satisfaction over the good progress made during the last six months.
2. The work Plan for 2008 was approved.
3. The Committee suggested that a draft copy of Biosafety Regulations should be sent to FAO for review while the document was being formatted and edited for final printing. It was also recommended that the country regulations, specially the comparison table, should be uploaded on APCoAB website for wider access by interested users.
4. APCoAB weekly news releases should be circulated as e-mail dispatches and be widely distributed among related experts and institutions in the AP region.
5. Awareness meetings to be organized to build consensus on important issues related to application of agricultural biotechnology in the region.
6. An expert meeting may be organized to suggest measures for enhancing the impact of APCoAB website as an information dissemination system on agricultural biotechnology in the AP region. This could be done in collaboration with ISAAA.
7. Short summaries of APCoAB publications should be compiled and uploaded on APCoAB website for quick reference by users.
8. The training course on marker-aided selection previously proposed to be held in IRRI, may now be held in ICRISAT, since IRRI has asked a high training fee. Dr. Hoisington agreed to host APAARI/APCoAB nominees in the DBT funded training program being conducted by ICRISAT. PAARI/APCoAB would pay the air fares.
9. Efforts need to be continued for raising resources and developing partnerships to further expand the activities of APCoAB.
10. An amount of \$5,000 should be earmarked in the budget for consultancy to prepare project proposals to be submitted to various funding agencies (this amount has been included in the budget estimate for 2008 as given in Annexure III).
11. While preparing annual budget, provision for a carry over amount of \$ 40,000 or 90 days of committed expenditure may be kept.

8. Any other item:

Members noted that Ms. Neha is currently working as Research Associate and Ms. Monika has joined as Admn. Associate in APAARI/APCoAB.

The meeting was closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair.



VIII STEERING COMMITTEE

28 February, 08

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<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 E-mail: raghunath.ghodake@nari.org.pg</p>	<p>Dr. R.S. Paroda Executive Secretary APAARI FAO RAP of the UN Maliwan Mansion 39 Phra Atit Road Bangkok 10200 Thailand E-mail: raj.paroda@apaari.org</p>
<p>Dr. Mangala Rai Secretary (DARE) & DG (ICAR) Krishi Bhawan, ICAR New Delhi-110001 E-mail: mrai.icar@nic.in</p>	<p>Dr. David Hoisington Representative Global Theme Leader, GT-Biotechnology ICRISAT, Patancheru 502-324 Andhra Pradesh E-mail: d.hoisington@cgiar.org</p>
<p>Dr. Karsedis Distabanjong Sr. Plant Biotechnologist Office of Biotechnology Research and Development Department of Agriculture Thailand E-mail: karsedis@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Mr. Raju Barwale Managing Director Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Co. Ltd. Resham Bhawan, 4th Floor 78 Veer Nariman Road, Mumbai 400 020 Email: raju.barwale@mahyco.com</p>
<p>Dr. Bhagirath Chaudhary Representative ISAAA C/o ICRISAT, NASC Complex DPS Marg, New Delhi 110 012 E-mail: b.choudhary@cgiar.org</p>	<p>Dr. JL Karihaloo Coordinator APCoAB C/o ICRISAT, NASC Complex DPS Marg, New Delhi 110 012 E-mail: j.karihaloo@cgiar.org</p>



SUMMARY ACCOUNT STATEMENT OF APCoAB
01 January – 31 December 2007
(Amount in US Dollars)

ITEMS	RECEIVED	DISBURSEMENTS		BALANCE
		Budget	Actual Used	
Amount B/F				57,034.89
1. Contributions	35,015.93			
2. Interest Income	1,221.57			
3. Other Income:				
3.1 Refund	7,496.34			
4. Secretariat Support:				
4.1 Office Stationery & Office equipment		10,000.00	643.23	
4.2 Miscellaneous / Communication			4,671.95	
5. Publications		10,000.00	2,529.31	
6. Consultancy		40,000.00	40,597.22	
7. Travel		10,000.00	4,304.38	
8. Training		20,000.00		
9. Meetings		20,000.00		
9.1 Expenses of Steering Com/General/High Level Meetings			11,278.35	
TOTAL	43,733.84	110,000.00	64,024.44	36,744.29

Remark: Expenditure on behalf of APAARI US\$ 243.98

Total amount in BKK office:

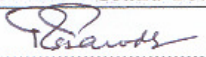
US\$ 34,969.73

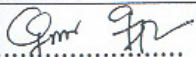
Total amount in New Delhi office:


US\$ 1,530.58

Grand Total:

US\$ 36,500.31


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Dr. Raj Paroda
Executive Secretary, APAARI


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Ms. Urairat Rujirek
Accountant, APAARI


.....
Mr. Rattanachai Dumnersawat
External Auditor

*Annexure III***APCoAB Budget for 2008 (1-1-2008 to 31-12-2008)**

ITEMS	Expected Receipts (US\$)	Expected expenditure (US\$)
Amount B/F	36,744.29	
1. Contributions		
1.1 APAARI	20,000.00	
1.2 ACIAR	10,000.00	
1.3 Mahyco	5,000.00	
1.4 FAO	7,500.00	
1.5 CoA, Taipei	35,000.00	
2. Secretarial Support:		
2.1 Salary of Assistant, Research Fellow		7,000.00
2.2 Office Stationery, Office Equipment, Miscellaneous/Communication		3,000.00
3. Consultancy		
3.1 Salary of Coordinator		36,000.00
3.2 Consultancy for preparing Concepts Notes		5,000.00
4. Travel		10,000.00
5. Publications SSA, Printing and postage		10,000.00
6. Training		20,000.00
7. Meetings Expenses of Steering Com./ Consultation meeting		15,000.00
TOTAL	144,244.29	106,000.00
	Expected Balance on 1-1-2009	38,244.29