

IGTC Policy team on Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (CBP)



IGTC
International Grain Trade Coalition



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More than 85% of international trade grains, oilseeds, pulses, and other agri-bulks is subject to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the related Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). Together they provide for the only multilateral regulatory measures for the Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) that result from crop biotechnology. The CBD is the umbrella multilateral instrument that dictates what measures are to be addressed by the CPB. 196 Countries have ratified the CBD. The CPB focuses on transboundary movement of LMOs and its potential impact on biological diversity. The CPB includes several articles that address both the cultivation (seeds for planting) and as well as plant products imported for Food, Feed or further Processing (FFP). The implementation of the CPB results in major consequences for trade whether or not the countries involved in the trade are party to the Convention. There are 173 Countries party to the CPB.

In preparation for meetings of Parties to both the CBD and CPB in the third quarter of 2022, IGTC is focused on further advancement of international trade by addressing the CBD and CPB developments, so they provide for trade facilitative measures that ensure safe products are subject to a global rules-based system based on science.

Historically, and with early seed technologies, LMOs addressed by the CPB were limited to traditional transgenic techniques of modern biotechnology (Genetically Modified Organisms / GMOs). Plant varieties created through traditional breeding have been considered out of scope of the CPB. However, with the innovation of new genomic technologies like gene editing, the parties of the CBD introduced a yet to be defined broad topic titled “Synthetic Biology” (SynBio). The implications of potentially unnecessary and burdensome regulations resulting from the inclusion of SynBio in CPB measures needs to be understood and addressed.



The IGTC is proceeding to advance its priority on sound, responsible, and predictable commercial and official measures that result from the CBD and CPB by working to provide for CBD and CBP Conventions that support and enhance the efficient and reliable global handling and transportation system for grains, oilseeds and other agri bulk products by:

Providing for practical, transparent, and timely regulatory frameworks based on scientific risk-based principles for the international movement of products that may contain LMOs derived from modern biotechnology.

Preventing unwarranted inclusion of measures restricting the international movement of crops produced from both transgenic and gene-edited seeds.

Ensuring the Parties to the CBD and CBP have the responsibility to not undermine the provision of food security through international trade.

Securing the sovereign rights within the respective jurisdictions of Parties to apply minimum compliance and choice to formulate and enforce national or regional regulatory frameworks.

Limiting the scope of the Conventions to provide for successful implementation and viable compliance by including requirements and related instruments that are:

- A sufficiently adaptable to allow compatible sovereign decisions to reflect each country's biosafety and biological diversity priorities and economic condition.
- B do not conflict with other key trade impacting international agreements including the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the Paris Agreement UNFCCC.

In 2022 the IGTC is focused on monitoring, assessing, influencing, and reporting on:

- 1 **Outcomes from dialogues** that influence potential decisions at during the meetings of the CBD and CBP in the third quarter.
- 2 **The definition** of Synthetic biology and products characterization 3. Risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (LMOs) linked with the SynBio as well as transgenic seed production technologies.
- 3 **Emerging biodiversity** conservation priorities and practices
- 4 **Developments in the CBD and CBP** regarding pesticide use and socioeconomic and sociocultural regulatory or judicial frameworks
- 5 **Assessing the nexus** of the CBD and CBP with national, regional and multilateral trade measures.

REFERENCES

Current work: Preparation for COP15

Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice meeting documents : <https://bit.ly/3MpTRsQ>

Global webinar on the launch of CBD Technical Series No. 100 on Synthetic Biology link: <https://bit.ly/3l1vn8Z>

NOTES

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