

Thank you Madam Chair.

I am making this statement on behalf of Third World Network and Ecoropa.

The Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs and Monitoring in the Context of Risk Assessment has undergone numerous rounds of peer review, testing, revision and improvement, as requested by Parties. Many developing country Parties in particular have expressed their need for and the usefulness of the guidance on risk assessment. We therefore call on Parties to endorse and use it widely, without further delay.

The issue is now even more urgent than ever, with the developments in synthetic biology. The AHTEG on Synthetic Biology has concluded that living organisms developed through current and near future applications of synthetic biology are similar to LMOs as defined under the Cartagena Protocol. A coordinated approach on synthetic biology, as recommended by the COP-MOP, is therefore clearly needed for risk assessment.

In the COP discussions on synthetic biology, it is noted that risk assessment methodologies and principles may need to be updated and adapted for current and future developments and applications of synthetic biology. The need to update and adapt risk assessment methodologies is also acknowledged in the call for cooperation in the development of guidance and capacity building activities when assessing effects of synthetic biology.

As such, Parties should establish a process for the development of guidance on “Risk Assessment of LMOs developed through synthetic biology”, as well as on LM fish on the basis of the outlines already developed by the AHTEG. The AHTEG therefore needs to be extended in order to do so, as well as to develop guidance on additional topics, as requested by Parties.

Thank you Madam Chair.