THE ABS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
L'INITIATIVE DE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES POUR L'APA

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Meeting of the Caribbean Steering Committee 2014

28 November 2014, Bay Garden Hotel, Rodney Bay Village, Saint Lucia

A g e n d a

	Friday, 28 November 2014
08:30	**Welcome and Opening –** *Hartmut Meyer, Secretariat of the ABS Capacity Development Initiative* **Election of the Chair for the meeting** **Adoption of the agenda** **Round of introductions**
09:00	**Terms of References of the Steering Committee** *Presentation of updated ToR (Hartmut Meyer) - Discussion and adoption*
09:10	**Progress Report 2014** *Presentation of activities and achievements (Hartmut Meyer)* *Questions and answers, discussion*
09:30	**Elements of the Work Plan and Budget 2015** *Introduction by the Secretariat (Hartmut Meyer)* Specific topics for discussion: • Setting up the work plan 2015 based on results of the 3rd Caribbean ABS Workshop • Regional capacity development priorities to be integrated into the work plan 2015 • Collaboration of the ABS CDI/CCS with the regional and national GEF/NPIF projects • Update on the regional conference on "Marine Biodiversity and Applied Science in the Caribbean – Towards Sustainable Use and Fair and Equitable Benefit Sharing" (May/June 2015) • Timing and topics of the 4th Caribbean ABS Workshop considering relevant regional and international events in 2015
	Coffee/tea
	(continued)
11:45	**Decision on the way forward**
12:00	**Closing**

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Minutes

The meeting was opened at 08:45 and chaired by Hartmut Meyer, ABS Initiative.

The agenda was presented and accepted.

The participants introduced themselves. Following 9 members were present:

Stanley Malone (Suriname), Miguel A. Vales García (Cuba), Jannel Gabriel (Saint Lucia), Sylvia Mitchell (University of the West Indies, Mona Campus), Gilbertha St. Rose (CAPSICUM), Hartmut Meyer (ABS Capacity Development Initiative), Valérie Normand (ABS Capacity Development Initiative), Thérèse Yarde (CARICOM Secretariat), Erie Tamale (CBD Secretariat), later: Laurent Jean Pierre (TRAMIL)

Item 1: Terms of References of the Steering Committee

Hartmut Meyer presented the draft ToR as developed by Thérèse Yarde and himself. The participants discussed and revised the ToR. A final draft for adoption by the Steering Committee is attached as Annex 1.

Item 2: Progress Report 2014

Hartmut Meyer presented briefly the work done by the ABS CDI in the region (for details see Annex 2).

Thérèse Yarde presented activities of the CCS supporting the implementation of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol (for details see Annex 3).

Item 3: Elements of the work plan and budget 2015

Hartmut Meyer explained that as result of the technical problems that emerged in 2014 concerning the funding of the work of the ABS Initiative and which were resolved only recently, no concrete budget for 2015 could be presented at this point of time. Yet, the Initiative is convinced that a budget can be presented at the beginning of Q2 2015. While some commitments with regard to the organisation and participation at selected activities can be given already now, a substantial work plan including budget lines for 2015 can only be developed after the consolidation of the funding basis.

A) Regional activities to be convened or planned in 2015

1) Trainings and Conferences

- MAT negotiation training by the CCS, supported by the ABS Initiative; based on the concept developed by the ABS Initiative and engaging 2 experts who developed and tested the concept (possibly Q2 or Q3 2015)
- Training on the development of national ABS legal frameworks on the basis of the concept developed by the IDLO and the ABS Initiative. CCS and SCBD to discuss possible funding and cooperation, the training could be supported by the ABS Initiative (possibly Q2 or Q3 2015).

- Conference "Marine Biodiversity and Applied Science in the Caribbean – Towards Sustainable Use and Fair and Equitable Benefit Sharing" convened by the ABS Initiative in cooperation with the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica, (Q4 2015); 75.000 EUR funding are secured from the GIZ projects "Blue Solutions" and "Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions"

The 4th Caribbean ABS Workshop will be convened in Q4 2016, amongst others covering the activities of the regional UNEP-GEF ABS project implemented by IUCN.

2) Amendment of Research Permits to include ABS Clauses

One of the outcomes of the workshop was a recognition that the amendment of existing research permit formats to include ABS clauses could serve as an interim measure in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, by introducing ABS elements in the research permitting process at the beginning of the R&D process. In order to get an overview of formats currently used in the region in order to suggest amendments to cover ABS issues, the CCS will

- Invite the NFPs at the beginning of 2015 to send in their existing permit application formats within a 3 month period;
- Compile the existing formats; and
- Make them available to the ABS-CDI and the SCBD.

The ABS-CDI will develop options for ABS clauses to be included in the research permits. Countries could then decide whether and how to use the suggested ABS clauses. This activity is to be seen as part of the gap analysis of existing legal instruments and institutional arrangements related to ABS that is to be carried out by Caribbean countries as one of the first steps in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

3) Cooperation with the Regional IUCN ABS Project

One of the recommendations of the workshop was that the UNEP-GEF/IUCN project needs to be further planned and implemented in close contact and cooperation with the ABS CDI and the CCS. Tea García Huidobro of IUCN plans to be at GIZ / ABS CDI in Jan 2015 to continue the talks started in Saint Lucia. All three organisations should be invited to participate in their respective planned ABS activities for the region (e.g. workshops) with a view to best support collaboration and synergies in the implementation of their respective ABS related work programmes. It became apparent that the three lines of activities focus on different issues; the IUCN project specifically adds the element of national support to the more regional focus of the ABS CDI and CCS activities. It seems to be feasible to coordinate all three lines of activities and create synergies with a relatively low amount of extra work.

4) Cooperation with the OECS in Drafting Regional ABS Regulations

During the workshop, the Director-General of OECS suggested that OECS could initiate a process for the development of a sub-regional legal framework to support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. During a meeting of OECS, CCS, SCBD and ABS CDI after the workshop, three areas of activities were identified:

1) Development of ABS policy/strategy (analyse and, if necessary, amend existing OECS policies and strategies)
2) Development of legal ABS framework

3) Development of an ABS awareness raising campaign

In the context of the above activities media workshops could be organised and media kits developed for use in other Caribbean states. It was suggested to involve regional press agencies as Prensa Latina and IPS Latin America and Caribbean.

Hartmut Meyer will explore the possibilities of the ABS CDI entering into an ABS cooperation with OECS and continue the discussion with Norma Cherry-Fevrier of OECS.

5) ABS Reference Material

The ABS CDI, together with its partners, should compile annotated ABS reference materials e.g. regulations, guidelines, contracts. This activity should be started after the adoption of the African Union ABS Guidelines of the ABS Initiative by AMCEN envisaged for the beginning of March 2015.

6) Online Courses / Training-of-Trainers

It was suggested to develop online ABS-courses, with a specific focus on Training-of-the-Trainer activities. Cuba currently runs an online ABS-course. Teresa Cruz is involved and would be invited to share information regarding the concept developed and their experiences. The ABS CDI participated in an online course on IPR and ABS conducted for South Asian and Central American countries with good experiences. The need for and content of such courses should be discussed within ABS CDI and with its partners.

B) National activities to be convened or planned in 2015

1) The Bahamas

The ABS Initiative continues to provide technical support in the development of the ABS GEF MSP of The Bahamas; the full project proposal is due end of May 2015.

2) Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic receives support in conducting a workshop on TK documentation in the context of the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Q1 or Q2 2015.

3) Analysis of Research Permits and Tracking of GR/aTK in the Value Chain

Using the methodology developed with activity B 1), information gained from national research permits granted should be used to develop a better picture and understanding of the past demand for access to GR and aTK in Caribbean countries and to get an overview about publications and patents which are related to GR and aTK accessed in the region. For this purpose, the ABS Initiative will invite the NFPs in Q2 to analyse research permits granted over the past 10 years by examining a defined set of information on applicants, accessed species etc. to be entered in the electronic format in order to assess the demand for access to GR and aTK. The format is to be developed in the context of the Bahamian ABS project. The information drawn from permits granted could then also be used to screen scientific publications and patent databases to reveal which permit-based R&D activities resulted in publications and/or patents. This information would constitute a base line to determine

the demand for access to GR and aTK and the ABS potential in a specific country. The information can also be used to inform national decision makers about the utilisation of domestic GR and aTK abroad and to promote the ABS concept domestically.

4) SGP

It was suggested that the UNDP SGP coordinators should be informed about ABS issues. SGPs appear to be a suitable instrument to inform local communities about ABS and to link ABS to local projects on conservation and sustainable use of GR and aTK. The ABS CDI is already supporting UNDP to integrate ABS in SGPs and will intensify its work in 2015.

5) ILCs and aTK

Due to the different situation in the Caribbean countries concerning the existence and recognition of indigenous peoples, a common regional approach in the context of ABS is not advisable. Instead, concrete ABS-activities involving ILCs and dealing with aTK should for the time being undertaken at national level or within groups of countries that follow comparable policies. In general, activities should aim at raising awareness of the value of aTK, especially in cases using NTFPs, and at including aTK as valuable knowledge in national development strategies.

Closure

Hartmut Meyer thanked the participants for their valuable input and closed the meeting at 12:15.