

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

**5 June 2006**

Venue:  
**Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok**

**PROCEEDINGS**



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

## **Proceeding of the Fifth Steering Committee Meeting of Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology held on 5 June 2006**

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### **Introduction and Welcome**

The Fifth Steering Committee Meeting of APCoAB was held on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 at Rama Garden Hotel, Bangkok. The meeting was chaired by Prof. H.P.M. Gunasena, Chairman, APAARI and attended by ten Steering Committee members and special invitees (Annexure I).

Prof. Gunasena welcomed the participants and apprised them about the recent developments in APCoAB, including appointment of new Coordinator. He recalled that APCoAB was established in view of express need felt by the Asia-Pacific countries to benefit from each others expertise in application of biotechnology for improving agricultural productivity and farm incomes in the region. He mentioned that tissue culture technology is the best option available for mass multiplication of vegetatively propagated plants like pineapple and banana and the same needs to be adopted on a wider scale in other crops as well. Several other useful developments in research and application of biotechnology are taking place in some selected countries but lack of capacity in others is proving a handicap in their wider adoption across the region. Hence, capacity building and developing intra-regional linkages should be the major thrust areas of APCoAB.

Dr. Thierry Mennesson, Vice-Chairman APAARI in his remarks pointed out that biotechnology is at different levels of application in the countries of Asia-Pacific region. Accordingly, there is a need to share knowledge and experiences within the region so that benefits of biotechnology are transferred to all the needy societies of the region.

The agenda of the meeting (Annexure II) was put up for approval and the same was unanimously adopted.

Dr. R. S. Paroda, Executive Secretary APAARI welcomed the members of the Steering Committee and special invitees and solicited their advice in enabling APCoAB fulfill its mandate of harnessing biotechnology for the benefit of society in the Asia-Pacific region. He pointed out that the programs and action plans have been thoroughly worked out in the previous meetings including the High Level Policy Dialogue on Biotechnology for Food Security and Poverty Alleviation: Opportunities and Challenges held in November 2005. He mentioned that Iran was included as a member of APCoAB Steering Committee in the last meeting and he was pleased that Dr. Ghareyazie has been able to attend. Dr. Paroda expressed his appreciation for the funding support received from Rockefeller Foundation, Monsanto, ACIAR, MAHYCO, JIRCAS, GFAR, and FAO. He further hoped that their support would continue at this critical phase of the Consortium. He also was optimistic of support from Syngenta Foundation. APAARI is committed to continue its support to APCoAB while FAO and GFAR will be approached for funding support for specified activities. Dr. Paroda mentioned that while APAARI would continue supporting APCoAB, it should eventually emerge as a leading organization on its own right.

### **Action Taken Report:**

Dr. Paroda informed that following actions were taken on the decisions taken in the earlier Steering Committee Meetings:

- 1) Work plan has been modified to include priority activities; viz. public awareness, compilation of information on biosafety regulations and workshops and training program on biosafety regulations and molecular aided selection.
- 2) One regional level workshop and one training program are planned for 2006. As recommended by the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting, resource persons from well developed NARS in the region are proposed to be invited for delivering lectures.
- 3) APCoAB is collaborating with regional/international institutes like ICRISAT and IRRI for conducting workshop and training programs.
- 4) The message that biotechnology is not all GMOs is being conveyed by bringing out publications on other biotechnological applications – “Micropropagation of Sugarcane”, “Micropropagation of Potato”, “Micropropagation of Datepalm” etc.
- 5) As a follow up of the Fourth Steering Committee recommendations, information is being collated on the biosafety regulations of the Asia-Pacific countries and same will be posted on website and circulated widely.

### **Progress Report:**

Dr. J.L. Karihaloo, APCoAB Coordinator, made a detailed presentation of the progress made by APCoAB since the last Steering Committee meeting. Salient points highlighted were:

- 1) “Bt Cotton in India – A Status Report” has recently been published and the same is being widely distributed.
- 2) Draft status reports on “Micropropagation of Potato” and “Micropropagation of Sugarcane” have been received from the authors and are being technically reviewed. The revision of the manuscripts is in progress.
- 3) APCoAB has offered to publish “Biotechnology Case Studies in the Pacific” written by the scientists of the Pacific region. The draft manuscript has been received from Dr. Mary Taylor and the comments have been communicated for its revision.
- 4) APCoAB website has been fully redesigned and new webpages are under construction in order to provide value added information to all concerned.
- 5) Information is being collated on biosafety regulations of the Asia-Pacific region. Status of individual countries on development of biosafety framework is being compiled for distribution among both public and private institutions and the national regulatory authorities of the region.
- 6) One workshop on “Harmonization of Biosafety Regulations for Transgenic Crops in the Asia-Pacific Region” and one training program on “Molecular Aided Selection for Crop Improvement” are being proposed during 2006.
- 7) APCoAB actively participated in APAARI-FAO-GFAR “High Level Policy Dialogue on Biotechnology for Food Security and Poverty Alleviation: Opportunities and Challenges” and facilitated the compilation of the proceedings.
- 8) The Steering Committee was also apprised of the recent efforts of APCoAB in developing collaborations and raising of resources.

The Executive Secretary, APPARI presented the Audited Accounts Statement of APCoAB for the period 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005. The committee examined the statement and unanimously approved the same and appreciated timely action as well as for proper maintenance of accounts. The Accounts Statement for the period 1 January 2006 to 31 March 2006 was also presented along with the details of funding support received during 2005 and 2006, and the expected support for 2007. Both statements are attached as Annexure III and IV, respectively.

### **General Discussion and Recommendations**

Following the presentations of Executive Secretary, APAARI and APCoAB Coordinator, the Chairman invited the participants to offer their comments on the progress so far and suggestions for the future course of action by APCoAB so that it fulfils the needs of capacity building, technology transfer and information dissemination in the region. Dr. Jerry Flint, Dr. Malcolm Hazelman, Dr. Raghunath Ghodake, Dr. Behzad Ghareyazie, Dr. Thierry Mennesson and Dr. Rupert Best participated in the discussion and gave important suggestions. The participants appreciated the overall progress made by APCoAB; and the views expressed mainly related to the following aspects:

- 1) There was consensus that the publication on status of Bt cotton in India had presented a balanced report of the impact of Bt cotton technology in India. The title of the publication had also been appropriately kept as “Status Report” since it indicated the per se neutral position of APCoAB with respect to GM technology. However, the analysis of various studies did lead to the conclusion that the technology has resulted in significantly reduced bollworm infestation and higher cotton yields, which has been appropriately projected. It was recommended that a 1-2 page summary of the Status Report should be circulated for wider distribution and general public awareness, in association with ISAAA.
- 2) Need was expressed for bringing out more status reports/success stories of relevance to the Asia-Pacific region. The preparation of status report on Bt Cotton in China needs to be followed up. The success story on date palm micropropagation in Iran should become available very soon, as promised by Dr. Ghareyazie
- 3) APCoAB needs to develop information on emerging issues like food safety, labeling and public acceptance of GM crops.
- 4) Suggestions were made regarding the proposed Workshop on Biosafety Regulations. It was recommended that since the workshop would be one of the many efforts required to develop a harmonized approach for biosafety guidelines; the title of the workshop needs to be modified appropriately. Resource persons should be from the region but should not have any conflict of interest. In view of the diversity of awareness regarding biotechnology in the region, it would be desirable to include a basic lecture on techniques and applications of genetic engineering.
- 5) Syngenta Foundation should be approached for funding support to the proposed training program on Marker Aided Selection, as was suggested by Dr. Andrew Bennett during the High Level Policy Dialogue in November last
- 6) Besides conducting activities within the Asia-Pacific region, APCoAB should also pay attention to developing inter-regional linkages, in order to see if a GPP on

- biotechnology could be established under the umbrella of GFAR with needed funding support.
- 7) Funds need to be raised from different sources to meet the core budget requirements as well as for its expanding activities. Activity sheet with required funding for each activity may be attached with these proceedings in order to have a clear picture regarding resource requirements (Annexure V).
  - 8) In addition to the expected funding support from APAARI, ACIAR, Monsanto, MAHYCO and Rockefeller Foundation, organizations/donors such as Asian Development Bank, French Ministry of External Affairs, CIDA, Islamic Development Bank, USAID, JIRCAS, Global Crop Diversity Trust, IDRC etc should be approached for support.
  - 9) GFAR should be approached for contribution of \$ 30,000, on par with others, for 2006. The Chairman, APAARI may flag this issue for discussion in the forthcoming Steering Committee meeting of GFAR to be held in Sana'a, Yemen in the last week of June, 2006.

Both Prof. Gunasena and Dr. Raj Paroda thanked the members for their valuable suggestions in the meeting and making it convenient to attend despite their busy schedule. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

**Asia-Pacific Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology  
Fifth Steering Committee Meeting  
(List of Participants)**

**Prof. H.P.M. Gunasena, Chairman**

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**Special Invitees**

**Dr. Thierry Mennesson**

Vice-Chairman APAARI & Director General,  
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**Dr. Satoru Miyata**

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**ASIA-PACIFIC CONSORTIUM ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY**

**V Steering Committee Meeting  
5 June 2006, Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok  
(09:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.)**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome Address by the Chairman – Prof. H.P.M. Gunasena
2. A Brief on Action Taken Report – Dr. Raj Paroda
3. Recent Progress – Dr. J.L. Karihaloo
4. Work Plan for 2006 – Dr. J.L. Karihaloo
5. Audited Account for 2005 – Mr. P.K. Saha
6. Resource Generation Activities – Dr. J.L. Karihaloo
7. Any Other Item



**SUMMARY ACCOUNT STATEMENT OF APCoAB**  
01 January – 31 December 2005  
(Amount in US Dollars)

ITEMS Amount B/F	RECEIVED	DISBURSEMENTS		BALANCE
		Budget	Actual Used	
				48,737.34
1. Contributions	120,550.50			
2. Interest Income	1,157.95			
3. Other Income:				
3.1 Refund				
3.2 Profit and Loss on Transfer				
4. Secretariat Support:		25,000.00		
4.1 Office Stationery & Office equipment			2,300.82	
4.2 Miscellaneous / Communication			2,311.59	
5. Publications		10,000.00	2,579.45	
6. Consultancy		40,000.00	29,817.37	
7. Travel		15,000.00	3,015.74	
8. Training		20,000.00		
9. Meetings		50,000.00		
9.1 Expenses of Steering Com/General/High Level Meetings			72,934.70	
9.2 Expenses of special programs			9,646.04	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>121,708.45</b>	<b>160,000.00</b>	<b>122,605.71</b>	
				<b>47,840.08</b>

Retransferred to APAARI

US\$ (5,000.00)

Total amount in BKK office:

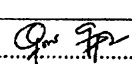
US\$ 31,438.35

Total amount in New Delhi office:

US\$ 21,401.73

**Grand Total:****US\$ 47,840.08**

  
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Dr. Raj Paroda 17/4/05  
Executive Secretary, APAARI

  
.....  
Ms. Urairat Rujirek  
Accountant, APAARI

  
.....  
Mr. Rattanachai Dumnernsawat  
External Auditor

### Details of funds received during 2005

Organization/Company	Amount
Mahyco	\$10,091.74
Rockefeller Foundation	\$30,000
JIRCAS	\$10,458.76
Monsanto	\$30,000
Fund support from GFAR for Policy Dialogue	\$20,000
Fund support from FAO for Policy Dialogue	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$120,550.50</b>





**SUMMARY ACCOUNT STATEMENT OF APCoAB**  
01 January – 31 March 2006  
(Amount in US Dollars)

ITEMS	RECEIVED	DISBURSEMENTS		BALANCE
		Budget	Actual Used	
Amount B/F				47,840.08
1. Contributions	75,054.17			
2. Interest Income				
3. Other Income:				
3.1 Refund				
3.2 Profit and Loss on Transfer				
4. Secretariat Support:		25,000.00		
4.1 Office Stationery & Office equipment			123.23	
4.2 Miscellaneous / Communication			1,875.11	
5. Publications		10,000.00		
6. Consultancy		40,000.00	7,700.01	
7. Travel		15,000.00	2,039.77	
8. Training		20,000.00		
9. Meetings		50,000.00		
9.1 Expenses of Steering Com/General/High Level Meetings				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75,054.17</b>	<b>160,000.00</b>	<b>11,738.12</b>	<b>111,156.13</b>

Total amount in BKK office:  
Total amount in New Delhi office:

US\$ 96,048.02  
US\$ 15,108.11

**Grand Total:**

**US\$ 111,156.13**

.....  
**Dr. Raj Paroda**  
Executive Secretary, APAARI

.....  
**Ms. Urairat Rujirek**  
Accountant, APAARI

.....  
**Mr. Rattanachai Dumnarsawat**  
External Auditor

**Details of funds received during 2006 (Up to May 2006)**

Organization/Company	Amount
Mahyco	\$5,054.17
Rockefeller Foundation	\$30,000
ACIAR	\$10,000
APAARI	\$30,000
FAO	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$80,054.17</b>

## Annexure V

### Expected Item wise expenditure during 2006

Item	Expected expenditure (US\$)
1. Secretariat Support:	
1.1 Office Stationery & Office equipment	5,000
1.2. Miscellaneous/Communication	5,000
2. Publications	10,000
3. Consultancy	40,000
4. Travel	15,000
5. Training	55,000
6. Meetings	
6.1. Expensed of Steering Com/General/High Level Meetings	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,000</b>

### Funds expected during 2007

Monsanto	\$30,000
APAARI	\$20,000
ACIAR	\$10,000
Mahyco	\$5,000
Syngenta	?
Rockfeller Foundation	?