

## African Biosafety Network of Expertise



News Bulletin 2: April 2011

### Ghana and Nigeria Make Progress in Biosafety Law Development Process

Ghana and Nigeria took firm steps towards passage of their respective biosafety bills into law by conducting training workshops for members of the legislature and other stakeholders including representatives from scientific and regulatory agencies, government ministries, inter-governmental organizations, the media, private sector, and non-governmental organizations. The overall objective of the meetings was to provide science-based information that will engender lively debate on the bills and will ensure passage into law.

The Biosafety law is expected to provide the legal instrument for the regulation of modern biotechnology and for the practice of good science in harnessing the benefits associated with modern biotechnology while ensuring the conservation and sustainable utilization of the genetic resources and protecting the environment, and human health from possible adverse impacts.

The sensitization workshop in Ghana was held on January 21-23 at Koforidua and was organized by Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa's project for Strengthening Capacity for Safe Biotechnology Management in sub-Saharan Africa (SABIMA) under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology and supported by AU-NEPAD Agency's African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE). The sensitization meeting for Nigerian stakeholders was held in Abuja and was organized by the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) under the auspices of the Ministry of Science and Technology with support from biosafety/biotechnology initiatives and institutions including the AU-NEPAD Agency's African Biosafety Network of Expertise, the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), the USAID-IFPRI Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS), and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. Ghanaian and Nigerian legislators pledged their commitment to expediting action to establish the much needed legal framework for safe and responsible use of modern biotechnology.



Participants at the sensitization meeting for Ghanaian legislators. Below, a cross-section of stakeholders at the meeting in Nigeria.



### ABNE Services and Upcoming Events (April – July 2011)

ABNE is a service network that provides regulators, policy- and decision-makers with access to the most up-to-date training and science-based information to regulate agricultural biotechnology. Training programs include biosafety workshops, short courses, internships, study tours, and expert consultations.

#### Training, education and technical assistance for 2011

**April 18-19:** In-country biosafety training workshop to strengthen capacity for application review, compliance, inspection and communication in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Target group: Regulators and lawyers from Tanzania. For more information, contact: [b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net) (STATUS: Confirmed)

**June 22-24:** In-country sensitization and biosafety information sharing workshop for regulators in Togo. (STATUS: Tentative) contact: [moussa.savado@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:moussa.savado@nepadbiosafety.net)

**July 10- 15:** NEPAD/ABNE-MSU Intellectual Property Rights short course in East Lansing, Michigan, USA. For more information, contact: [ransomca@msu.edu](mailto:ransomca@msu.edu) (STATUS: Confirmed)

**July 24-29:** NEPAD/ABNE Food Safety in East Lansing, Michigan, USA. For more information, contact: [kmaredia@msu.edu](mailto:kmaredia@msu.edu) (STATUS: Confirmed)

**July 31 – August 5:** NEPAD/ABNE Environmental Aspects of Agric Biotechnology in East Lansing, Michigan, USA. For more information, contact: [weebadde@msu.edu](mailto:weebadde@msu.edu) (STATUS: Confirmed)



## Networking and partnerships

ABNE networks through participation in regional and international meetings, forums and conferences. Coming up:

**May 13 – 15, 2011**, Conference on Biotechnology in Africa - Fostering Innovation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**June 8-10, 2011**, ICGEB training workshop on Biosafety risk communication for African regulators in Reduit, Mauritius.

## Quotes from African regulators



The annual biosafety short course organized by ABNE and Michigan State University has enabled the development of positive approaches to biosafety issues within a critical mass of players within Africa. I am one of the beneficiaries of this program and can testify that it has helped me immensely

in developing a functional biosafety system for Kenya.  
Dr. Roy B. Mugiira, Acting Chief Executive Officer, National Biosafety Authority Kenya.

The biosafety internship program enabled me to gain useful insights into best practices for performance of biosafety inspectorate and monitoring functions and I believe I speak for others when I say there is an urgent need to build the capacity of African inspectors in this regard. Mrs. Hannah S. Nuamah, Assistant Agric. Officer, Plant Protection & Regulatory Services Directorate, Ghana



## Down memory lane - Some ABNE Activities in 2010



African regulators at the Environmental Biosafety Short Course in Michigan State University on July 25-30, 2010.



Participants at the Preparatory Workshop for African delegates to COP-MOP 5 in Nairobi, Kenya on August 25-27, 2010.

## Information resources

Visit [www.nepadbiosafety.net](http://www.nepadbiosafety.net) for:

- Policy briefs on environmental biosafety, food safety, socio-economics and legal aspects of biosafety.
- Guidance on regulatory processes
- Information on biotechnology and biosafety issues

For more information on ABNE services, contact:

**ABNE Director, Prof. Diran Makinde**

[diran.makinde@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:diran.makinde@nepadbiosafety.net)



Makinde

**Editorial Team:** Samuel E. Timpo and Joy Landis

For technical assistance, contact ABNE Program officers:

**Dr. Moussa Savadogo**, Environmental safety

[moussa.savadogo@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:moussa.savadogo@nepadbiosafety.net)

**Dr. Allan Liavoga**, Food safety

[allan.liavoga@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:allan.liavoga@nepadbiosafety.net)

**Ms. Betty Kiplagat**, Legal aspects

[b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:b.kiplagat@nepadbiosafety.net)

**Samuel Timpo**, Socio-economic aspects

[sam.timpo@nepadbiosafety.net](mailto:sam.timpo@nepadbiosafety.net)



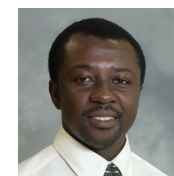
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