**Messages clés**

Si la biologie de synthèse est un domaine qui connaît une évolution rapide et qui offre un grand potentiel de production de substances médicales et de biocarburants et de produits chimiques plus performants, notamment, elle peut avoir des incidences négatives sur la biodiversité et la conservation des écosystèmes, la société et la culture, et aussi sur la biosécurité.

Tenant compte du fait que nos connaissances de ce qu'implique la biologie de synthèse sont encore très parcellaires, toutes les Parties à la COP, les autres gouvernements, les institutions de recherche, les entreprises et les différentes branches d’activité doivent partager les informations dont ils disposent concernant les produits, les projets et les activités de recherche dans le domaine de la biologie de synthèse, au vu de tous et en toute transparence.

**Le WWF accueille favorablement** les travaux du Forum en ligne et du Groupe spécial d’experts techniques (GSET) sur la biologie de synthèse. Reconnaissant qu'il existe un déficit non négligeable dans les connaissances relatives aux effets positifs et négatifs des produits et des composés issus de la biologie de synthèse, qui peuvent être des gènes, des espèces et des écosystèmes, le WWF demande instamment aux Parties à la CDB et aux autres gouvernements d'appliquer l’approche de précaution adoptée dans la décision XII/11 de la CDB dans leur action concernant la biologie de synthèse, en tenant compte des trois objectifs de la Convention.

**Le WWF formule les recommandations** suivantes à l'attention des Parties à la COP :

 1. Le WWF préconise de conserver la définition opérationnelle de la biologie de synthèse mise au point par le GSET et d'enlever les crochets du para c. Le WWF recommande de garder le para c plutôt que le para c alt. Le WWF appelle instamment à la réalisation de travaux supplémentaires, portant en particulier sur les critères d'inclusion et d'exclusion, et à la coordination nécessaire avec d’autres instruments internationaux liés à l’action dans le domaine de la biologie de synthèse ;

 2. Le WWF recommande de conserver tel quel le para d, en traitant les organismes vivants développés au moyen des applications actuelles de la biologie de synthèse de la même façon que les organismes vivants définis au titre du Protocole de Cartagena, conformément aux conclusions du GSET.

 3. La biologie de synthèse est susceptible de changer notre conception de ce qui caractérise les ressources génétiques. Par conséquent, le WWF apprécierait que les parties précisent dans quelle mesure l'utilisation des informations liées au séquençage du génome des ressources génétiques serait intéressante pour l'accès public et le partage des avantages.

**WWF welcomes the draft Suggested Recommendations as set out in UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2 Item 17 and calls on COP-13 to consider for inclusion the following proposed text changes in its final decisions.**

New text proposed by WWF is **in bold and underlined**. Text that WWF proposes to delete is ~~in strike through~~.

**Synthetic biology**

*The Conference of the Parties*

1. *Reaffirms* decision XII/24, in which it urged Parties and invited other Governments to take a precautionary approach, in accordance with decision XI/11, paragraph 4;
2. *Commends* the work of the Online Forum and the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology, and *welcomes* the conclusions and recommendations of the AHTEG as a basis for further discussion;

~~[~~(c) *Acknowledges* that the outcome of the deliberations of the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology on the operational definition is “synthetic biology is a further development and new dimension of modern biotechnology that combines science, technology and engineering to facilitate and accelerate the understanding, design, redesign, manufacture and/or modification of genetic materials, living organisms and biological systems”, and *notes* that additional work is required, in particular on the inclusion and exclusion criteria;~~]~~

~~[(c~~ *~~alt~~*~~)~~ *~~Deems it appropriate~~*~~, for the purpose of facilitating scientific and technical deliberations under the Convention and its Protocols, to use the operational definition as proposed by the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology that, “synthetic biology is a further development and new dimension of modern biotechnology that combines science, technology and engineering to facilitate and accelerate the understanding, design, redesign, manufacture and/or modification of genetic materials, living organisms and biological systems”;]~~

1. *Takes note* of the conclusion of the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology that living organisms developed through current applications of synthetic biology, or that are currently in the advanced stages of research and development, are similar to living modified organisms as defined in the Cartagena Protocol;[[1]](#footnote-1)
2. *Notes* that the general principles and methodologies for risk assessment under the Cartagena Protocol and existing biosafety frameworks provide a good basis for risk assessment regarding living organisms developed through current applications of synthetic biology, or that are currently in the advanced stages of research and development, but such methodologies may need to be updated and adapted for current and future developments and applications of synthetic biology;
3. *Also notes* that it is not clear, given the current stage of knowledge, whether or not some organisms of synthetic biology, which are currently in the early stages of research and development, would fall under the definition of living modified organisms under the Cartagena Protocol, and *further notes* that there are cases in which there may be no consensus on whether the result of a synthetic biology application is “living” or not;
4. *Invites* Parties, in accordance with their applicable domestic legislation or national circumstances, to take into account, as appropriate, socio-economic, cultural and ethical considerations when identifying the potential benefits and potential adverse effects of organisms, components and products resulting from synthetic biology techniques in the context of the three objectives of the Convention;
5. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments and relevant organizations, in the context of the three objectives of the Convention ~~[~~and taking into account, as appropriate, socio-economic, cultural and ethical considerations~~]~~:
6. To conduct research on the benefits and adverse effects of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology on biodiversity, with a view to filling knowledge gaps and identifying how those effects relate to the objectives of the Convention and its Protocols;
7. To promote and enable public and multi-stakeholder dialogues and awareness-raising activities on the potential benefits and potential adverse effects of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology on biodiversity, involving all relevant stakeholders and with the full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities;
8. To cooperate in the development of guidance and capacity-building activities with a view to assessing the potential benefits and potential adverse effects of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology and, if necessary, updating and adapting current methodologies for risk assessment of living modified organisms to organisms resulting from synthetic biology, as appropriate;
9. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations and indigenous peoples and local communities to submit to the Executive Secretary information and supporting documentation on:
10. Research, cooperation and activities noted in paragraph (h) above;
11. Evidence of benefits and adverse effects of synthetic biology vis-à-vis the three objectives of the Convention;
12. Experiences in conducting risk assessments of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology, including any challenges encountered, lessons learned and implications for risk assessment frameworks;
13. Examples of risk management and other measures that have been put in place to avoid or minimize the potential adverse effects of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology, including experiences of safe use and best practices for the safe handling of organisms developed through synthetic biology;
14. Regulations, policies and guidelines in place or under development which are directly relevant to synthetic biology;
15. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the current AHTEG on Synthetic Biology in accordance with the terms of reference attached hereto and also to contribute to the completion of the assessment as requested in paragraph 2 of decision XII/24;
16. *Also decides* to extend the open-ended online forum to support the work of the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology, and invites Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations to continue nominating experts to take part in the open-ended online forum;
17. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to review the recommendations of the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology and make further recommendation to the Conference of the Parties including on the analysis using the criteria set out in paragraph 12 of decision IX/29;
18. *Requests*  the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources:
19. Continue to facilitate moderated discussions under the open-ended online forum on synthetic biology through the Biosafety Clearing-House, and to continue to invite Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations to nominate experts to take part in the forum;
20. To make the information received through paragraph (i) above available online **and transparent;**
21. To compile and synthesize the results of the work referred to in the paragraphs above and make them available for further discussion through the online forum and the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group;
22. To convene moderated online discussions under the open-ended online forum and, subject to the availability of funds, a face-to-face meeting of the AHTEG on Synthetic Biology with the terms of reference annexed to the present decision, and submit the report of the AHTEG to peer review by Parties for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at a meeting held prior to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
23. To cooperate and establish synergies with other United Nations and international organizations whose mandates are relevant to synthetic biology;
24. To promote the full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in future activities relating to synthetic biology under the Convention;
25. *Welcomes* the recommendation of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, in its decision BS-VII/12, on a coordinated approach on the issue of synthetic biology, including its work on risk assessment and risk management ~~[~~as well as **social, economic** **and ethical** considerations, as appropriate~~]~~, and *invites* the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to take into account in its future deliberations relevant information resulting from the processes under the Convention;
26. ~~[~~*Invites* the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol to clarify, if and how, the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources relates to access and benefit‑sharing.~~]~~

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1. The term "early stages of research and development" was erroneously used in paragraphs 1(d) and (e) of SBSTTA recommendation XX/8, in replacement of the term "near future" used in the AHTEG report, to signify research and development that are approaching their intended objectives. In accordance with the discussions at SBSTTA-20 the term "advanced stages of research and development" was intended to be used and is inserted in this text as an editorial correction.    [↑](#footnote-ref-1)