

Food and Biotechnology

[Statement of Principles Regarding the Proposed Protocol on Biosafety under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity by Canadian Non-governmental Organizations](#)

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January 2000

Introduction

The Extraordinary Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will be reconvening in Montreal, Canada, from January 24-28, 2000. The following [statement of principles](#) outlines the views of the undersigned Canadian non-governmental organizations on the key outstanding issues in the negotiations.

- Biotech Action Montreal (BAM)
- Biotech Working Group Manitoba Eco-Network
- Blue Green Society
- Calgary Animal Rights Coalition
- Campaign for Pesticide Reduction-NB
- Canadian Biotech Action Network
- Canadian Environmental Law Association (verify)
- Canadian Health Coalition
- Canadian Health Institute
- Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy (CIELAP)
- Canadian Park And Wilderness Society - Edmonton Chapter
- Citizens Concerned About The Future Of The Etobicoke Waterfront (Inc.)
- Citizens' Environment Watch
- Cooper Institute
- Dairy Education Board
- Down to Earth (NB)
- Earth Action!
- Ecotourism society of Saskatchewan
- Edmonton Friends of the North Environmental Society

- Environmental Coalition of PEI
- Fundy Environmental Action Group
- Global Community Centre, Waterloo
- Gord Graff Publishing Inc.(www.goodmagazine.com)
- Greenest City
- Home Place Conservancy
- H.O.P.E.; Helpers Of Planet Earth, N.B.
- International Institute of Concern for Public Health
- Island Residents Against Toxic Environments (PEI)
- Le Regroupement écologiste Val d'Or et environs (Le REVE)
- Lennox and Addington County Citizens Concerned about Water Resources
- Napanee Citizens Concerned About Water Resources
- Nature Saskatchewan
- OPIRG-Brock
- PEI local committee of OXFAM
- Pembroke Area Field Naturalists
- People Against Nuclear Energy
- Physicians and Scientists for Responsible Genetics
- Poetical Asylum (PEI)
- Polaris Institute
- QPIRG Concordia
- QPIRG McGill
- QPIRG UQUAM
- Saskatoon Nature Society
- Saskatoon Zoo Society
- Sierra Youth Coalition (PEI)
- Sierra Club of Canada
- Similkameen Okanagan Organic Producers Association
- STORM Coalition
- The Clearinghouse Group
- The Green Campus Society
- The Ram's Horn
- Urban Ecology Centre
- Vegetarians of Alberta Association

"Science is not bad, but there is bad science. Genetic Engineering is bad science working with big business for quick profit against the public good."

Dr. Mae-Wan Ho
UK Open University

Statement of Principles

1. Scope of Protocol and Advanced Informed Agreement Procedure

The Protocol must apply to all first transboundary movements of Living Modified Organisms. There should be no exemptions for "contained uses," "commodities," or products intended as food, feed or for processing. Releases of LMOs into the environment during transportation and processing are inevitable due to leaks, spills and accidents. Therefore all first transboundary movements must be assessed for their potential impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. A Protocol which does not provide for this will not be protective of biological diversity. Parties should be permitted to require assessments of subsequent movements of LMOs at their discretion.

2. Precautionary Principle

Protocol must state that the lack of full scientific certainty shall not prevent a Party from

taking any measures it deems necessary to protect the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, from potential adverse effects of an LMO.

3. Socio-Economic Impacts

Consistent with Art.8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Protocol should provide for the consideration of socio-economic impacts of the introduction of LMOs on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account threats to human health. A Protocol which does not provide for this will not be protective of biological diversity.

4. Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements

Parties should only be permitted to deal with transboundary movements of LMOs under procedures established through Bilateral or Multilateral agreements, rather than the protocol, where those agreements are consistent with the principles, objectives and procedures of the Protocol and have been approved by the Parties to the Protocol.

5. Trade with Non-Parties

Trade in LMOs with non-parties to the Protocol should be prohibited. In the alternative, trade with non-parties should only be permitted through bilateral or multilateral agreements, which are consistent with the principles, objectives, and procedures of the Protocol and have been approved by the Parties to the Protocol.

6. Relationship to Other Agreements

The normal rules of international law should prevail in this regard. There should be no WTO override clause within the Protocol.

7. Settlement of Disputes

The Protocol should follow the procedures established by Article 27 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

8. Liability and Compensation

The Protocol should include a provision establishing a process for the elaboration of international rules and procedures for liability and redress with respect to damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms, and committing the Parties to complete this process within four years.

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6. Relationship to Other Agreements

The Protocol should follow the provisions of Article 22 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in this regard (i.e. The provisions of this protocol shall not affect the rights and obligations of any Party to the Protocol deriving from any existing international agreement, except where the exercise of those rights would cause damage or threats to biological diversity.)

7. Settlement of Disputes

The Protocol should follow the procedures established by Article 27 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

8. Liability and Compensation

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