



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

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TELEFAX TRANSMISSION

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| To: | Mr. Kenneth King Assistant Chief Executive Officer GEF Secretariat Washington, D.C., 20433, <u>USA</u> | Date: | 10 June 2002 |
| From: | Mr. Ahmed Djoghlafl Director Division of GEF Coordination | | |
| Subject: | MSP to support to national capacity to implement the National Biosafety Framework in Cuba | | |

In accordance with the agreed procedure, please find attached for final CEO approval the Medium Size Project included in the work programme approved by the December 2001 Council meeting on the implementation of National Biosafety Framework in Cuba.

The inter-agency task force on biosafety chaired by the GEF Secretariat has addressed the comments raised by the Swiss chair regarding the conformity of the biosafety submission with the initial biosafety strategy.

The inter-agency collaboration arrangements are reflected in the paragraph related to the "*Implementation arrangements*".

Regards.

ANNEX

UNEP response to the comments from the Swiss Council Member

1. Indeed the initial biosafety strategy adopted by the GEF Council in November 2000 provided that demonstration projects for the implementation of biosafety frameworks will be undertaken in two countries by region. In early 2001, the GEF Secretariat established an inter-agency task force comprising the implementing agencies as well as FAO and UNIDO. The Task force reviewed all the requests received taking also into account the decisions of the first meeting of the ICCP held in Montpellier in December 2000. The task force agreed to recommend 12 activities including the nine activities submitted for the December 2001 Council review. The original list was opened to countries that were not part of UNEP/GEF pilot biosafety project (i.e. Mexico, presented by UNDP) but have already in place a framework. Regarding Asia, the two other implementing agencies are assisting Malaysia and India to prepare similar activities for GEF funding. It must be noted that the main objective of the suggested activity is to gain experience through pilot projects on issues related to the implementation of frameworks so as to be ready when the global project of assisting 100 countries to prepare their frameworks will come to an end in three years time.
2. Paragraph 28 of the Initial strategy provides that "this type of assistance might be best provided to countries that have ratified the protocol". The ratification was not perceived as an explicit condition. However all countries assisted by UNEP have been requested explicitly to expedite their process of ratification hopefully before the disbursement of the money after council's approval. For example, Uganda has also ratified on the 30/11/2001.
3. Regarding the comments on the budget, indeed the amount of financial resources required for the implementation of the frameworks is different from the amount required for the preparation of the biosafety frameworks. However, the proposal aimed at re-arranging some suggested workshops, meetings or seminars will be taken into account during the implementation phase of these activities.