



Miscellaneous No.8 (2008)

**Amendment to the Convention on Access to
Information, Public Participation in
Decision-Making and Access to Justice in
Environmental Matters**

Almaty, 27 May 2005

[The Amendment has not been ratified by the United Kingdom]

*Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty
September 2008*

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**AMENDMENT TO THE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO
INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING
AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS¹**

Article 6, paragraph 11

For the existing text, substitute

11. Without prejudice to article 3, paragraph 5, the provisions of this article shall not apply to decisions on whether to permit the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms.

Article 6 bis

After article 6, insert a new article reading

ARTICLE 6 bis

**Public Participation in Decisions on the Deliberate Release
into the Environment and Placing on the Market of
Genetically Modified Organisms**

1. In accordance with the modalities laid down in annex I bis, each Party shall provide for early and effective information and public participation prior to making decisions on whether to permit the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms.

2. The requirements made by Parties in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article should be complementary and mutually supportive to the provisions of their national biosafety framework, consistent with the objectives of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.²

Annex I bis

After annex I, insert a new annex reading

¹ Treaty Series No.24 (2005) Cm 6586

² Treaty Series No.17 (2004) Cm 6170

Annex I bis

MODALITIES REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 6 BIS

1. Each Party shall lay down, in its regulatory framework, arrangements for effective information and public participation for decisions subject to the provisions of article 6 bis, which shall include a reasonable time frame, in order to give the public an adequate opportunity to express an opinion on such proposed decisions.

2. In its regulatory framework, a Party may, if appropriate, provide for exceptions to the public participation procedure laid down in this annex:

(a) In the case of the deliberate release of a genetically modified organism (GMO) into the environment for any purpose other than its placing on the market, if:

(i) Such a release under comparable bio-geographical conditions has already been approved within the regulatory framework of the Party concerned; and

(ii) Sufficient experience has previously been gained with the release of the GMO in question in comparable ecosystems;

(b) In the case of the placing of a GMO on the market, if:

(i) It was already approved within the regulatory framework of the Party concerned; or

(ii) It is intended for research or for culture collections.

3. Without prejudice to the applicable legislation on confidentiality in accordance with the provisions of article 4, each Party shall make available to the public in an adequate, timely and effective manner a summary of the notification introduced to obtain an authorization for the deliberate release into the environment or the placing on the market of a GMO on its territory, as well as the assessment report where available and in accordance with its national biosafety framework.

4. Parties shall in no case consider the following information as confidential:

(a) A general description of the genetically modified organism or organisms concerned, the name and address of the applicant for the authorization of the deliberate release, the intended uses and, if appropriate, the location of the release;

- (b) The methods and plans for monitoring the genetically modified organism or organisms concerned and for emergency response;
- (c) The environmental risk assessment.

5. Each Party shall ensure transparency of decision-making procedures and provide access to the relevant procedural information to the public. This information could include for example:

- (i) The nature of possible decisions;
- (ii) The public authority responsible for making the decision;
- (iii) Public participation arrangements laid down pursuant to paragraph 1;
- (iv) An indication of the public authority from which relevant information can be obtained;
- (v) An indication of the public authority to which comments can be submitted and of the time schedule for the transmittal of comments.

6. The provisions made pursuant to paragraph 1 shall allow the public to submit any comments, information, analyses or opinions that it considers relevant to the proposed deliberate release, including placing on the market, in any appropriate manner.

7. Each Party shall endeavour to ensure that, when decisions are taken on whether to permit the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment, including placing on the market, due account is taken of the outcome of the public participation procedure organized pursuant to paragraph 1.

8. Parties shall provide that when a decision subject to the provisions of this annex has been taken by a public authority, the text of the decision is made publicly available along with the reasons and considerations upon which it is based.



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