

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON BIOSAFETY OF THE PHILIPPINES
1993 Year-end REPORT

- I. From January to December 1993, the National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines (NCBP) undertook the following:
 - A. Assessed and recommended for approval the following applications for permit to import:
 1. Request of **Mr. H. Koganezawa** of IRRI to import transgenic rice seeds which will be used in the project: "Evaluation of Transgenic Rice Plants with Virus-Derived Genes for Resistance to Tungro, Part II" (application submitted on 27 January 1993) NCBP recommended approval of import permit, 26 February 1993.
 2. Request of **Dr. Rennie del Rosario** of A. T. VIRI, Inc. to import the foundation stock of Vaccinia virus from Japan which will be used in the project, "Production of Vaccinia-Inoculated Rabbit Skin for use in the processing of an anodyne (Drug) for Neuragia and Rheumatoid Arthritis" (November 24, 1992 application) Given conditional approval by the NCBP on March 2, 1993, subject to submission of all requirements.
 3. Request of **Dr. John Bennett**, Senior Molecular Biologist, IRRI:
 - a) to import plasmids: soybean B-1, 3-endoglucanase and pBINGUS, which will be used in the project: "Applications on Improvement of transformation methods" (application submitted on 27 January 1993) NCBP recommended approval of permit to import, 26 February 1993.
 - b) to import plasmids (Pmts-5, pIN2-gus, pActi-D, pICOO3) and use plasmids previously imported by Dr. Zapata (pTRA132, pCa11Gc, pIC-SBT1) in rice transformation studies and use the 7 plasmids in biolistic transformation experiments on rice methods (application dated 22 April received 26 April 1993) NCBP recommended approval of permit to import, 20 May 1993
 - c) to import transgenic rice seeds: lambda EMBL-3-T3/T7, Lambda EMBL3, p35S-mtl., pIR205, pUM388 (CryIV gene), pIR206, pIR207, pCIB4418, pCIBI322, which will be used in the rice transformation studies. Application received by NCBP on 11 June 1993. NCBP recommended approval of permit to import, 27 July 1993.
 - d) to import and use seeds of transgenic rice expressing an insecticidal protein gene, a synthetic version of the Cry1A (b) gene from *Bacillus thuringiensis* which will be used in the evaluation of transgenic rice resistance to insect pest. Application received by the NCBP on 9 July 1993. NCBP recommended approval of permit to import, 28 October 1993.
 - e) to import seeds of transgenic rice expressing bacterial ADP glucose pyrophosphorylase which will be used in the project entitled: "Evaluation of transgenic rice plants with *Escherichia coli* gene encoding ADP glucose pyrophosphorylase, a key enzyme in the regulation of starch biosynthesis (CE-1-2 Genome Manipulation)". Application received on 20 October 1993. NCBP recommended approval of permit to import, 23 December 1993. (NCBP decision, by ad-referendum)

4. Request of **Dr. Narceo B. Bajet** of the Department of Plant Pathology, UPLB to evaluate the project and apply for permit to import clones of tungro viruses obtained by the collaborators at Scripps for labelling with non-radioactive substances which will be used in the detection and measurement of nucleic acids specific to the tungro virus in rice, other host and insect vector. Application received on 12 June 1993. NCBP recommended approval of import permit, 27 July 1993.
5. Request of **Mr. Edilberto Perez**, President of Hedge Biotech Company, for NCBP action on his request for testing of Alken-Murray products which will be used in **the Pasig River Rehabilitation Program**. Based on the informational materials submitted, the NCBP, on 28 October 1993, recommended for consideration the issuance of import permit to the Plant Quarantine Service, BPI on the following microorganisms:

Escherichia coli, Bacillus thuringiensis, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Aspergillus niger, Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Pseudomonas stutzeri, Bacillus licheniformis, Pseudomonas putida

The NCBP deferred action on *Escherichia hermani*, *Nitrosomonas* and *Nitrobacter* pending receipt of all pertinent information on such organisms.

B. NCBP clearance/approval of the following:

- 1). Request of **Mr. Fritz-Walter Lange**, President of the SIMIAN CONSERVATION BREEDING & RESEARCH CENTER, INC. for approval of the pilot research project on the testing of non-infectious, killed inactivated polio virus vaccine using 32 heads of monkey Macaca fascicularis at their Tanay facility. (Application letter dated 30 May, received 7 May 1993 thru Dr. Q. L. Kintanar for action of the NCBP.) Given conditional approval on 20 May 1993 subject to inspection of research facilities in Tanay, Rizal.
- 2) Request of **Dr. Belen Morallo-Rejesus**, Professor, UPLB Department of Entomology, for evaluation of the project entitled: "Further introduction, mass-rearing and field releases of DBM parasitoids in the highland and lowland areas of the Philippines. Application received on 12 June 1993, for action of the NCBP during its 27 July 1993 meeting. Action deferred pending receipt of requested data and clarification on the issues raised. NCBP recommended approval of import permit on 28 October 1993.
- 3) Request of Dr. Elma Llaguno, Chairman, UP Diliman-IBC, for evaluation/assessment of the project of **Dr. Saturnina Halos**, UP Diliman entitled: "Identification & Mapping of Cellulase Genes in Penicillium using protoplast fusion & recombinant DNA techniques". Application received 19 April 1993. The NCBP recommended approval of the project for 2nd year funding by PCASTRD, 20 May 1993.
- 4) Request of **Dr. Evelyn Mae Mendoza**, IPB, UPLB, for approval of project entitled: "*Bacillus thuringiensis* Endotoxin Gene Transfer to corn, pechay and Chinese Cabbage". Proposal received, 20 September 1993, NCBP recommended approval of project for second year funding by the DOST GIA, 28 October 1993.
- 5) Request of **DR. F. A. BERNARDO**, Dep. Dir. Gene. Of IRRI, for clearance to use the following plasmids:

pDMC203, pDMC 205 (derivatives of plasmid pAct1-D.) pDMC204 (lacks the Act1-D promoter and intron which are replaced by the rice rbcS promoter p35S GUS INT (closely resembles (pCa11Gc)

brought in by Dr. Richard A. Jefferson, Director of CAMBIA in the research of Dr. John Bennett entitled: "Application and Improvement of biolistic transformation methods (Addendum 1)".

Application received on 30 August 1993, NCBP recommended approval of request, 28 October 1993.

- B. The NCBP conducted a series of Seminar-Dialogues in Cebu and Davao on May and 27 August 1993 respectively on the implementation of the first edition of the Philippine Biosafety Guidelines. There were a total of 200 participants coming from the academe, government research institutions, multi-national corporations, hospitals, university researchers engaged in biological research, members of the Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs) and other sectors of society. The Seminar-Dialogue aims to disseminate the provisions of the biosafety guidelines and identify problems and institutional constraints in relation to compliance with the guidelines.
- C. Members of the National Biosafety Committee of the Philippines (NCBP) participated in the Asian Biosafety Workshop sponsored by the International Service for the Acquisition held in Bogor, Indonesia from 19-23 April 1993. The highlights of the workshop is a resolution among the ASEAN countries to support the biosafety initiatives of each ASEAN countries through the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST). **It was also observed that the Philippines, is so far the only one of the five participating Asian countries which has a set of guidelines and regulatory organization in place.**
- D. In view of the recent developments in the field of biotechnology worldwide, a Technical Working Group (TWG) has been formed to review the first edition of the Philippine Biosafety Guidelines taking into consideration the comments and observations made on the guidelines by the participants, Chairmen of the Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs). We hope to come up with a second edition of the guidelines by mid-1994.
- E. Ms. J. F. L. Estacio, the NCBP Secretariat, participated in the UNIDO sponsored ASEAN Meeting/Workshop on Biotechnology on 22-26 November 1993 in Bangkok, Thailand. The ASEAN Expert Group:
1. Recognized the needs for a regional cooperation among member countries on the issue of biosafety;
 2. Agreed to use existing ASEAN Sub-committee on Biotechnology in undertaking regional harmonization on the issue of biosafety;
 3. Members nominated their contact nodes for issues relating to biosafety;
 4. Members were informed that the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Biotechnology meets regularly every six months. The agenda for the next shall include discussions on:
 - a) sharing of information and harmonization among member countries;
 - b) exploring funding donors to support the regional biosafety activities;
 - c) using UNIDO facilities to assist ASEAN on technical issues, funding sources, bioinformation system and contacts with other countries;
 - d) explore possibilities of future training and meeting among biosafety personnel in ASEAN member countries.

The output of the workshop is a recommendation for the establishment of national BINAS (Biosafety Information Network Advisory Service) nodes in the ASEAN, via INTERNET, which will function as a gateway for easy access of databases by all users group including national regulatory authorities, national and institutional biosafety committees. This will enable the member countries to build

up their national and regional capability in overview procedures and risk assessment methodology.