

Formal session of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and technological Advice (SBSTTA-24)

**Agenda item 5. Risk Assessment and risk management of living modified organisms**

**Statement of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), presented by Ms. June Batang-ay, TEBTEBBA**

Thank you, Chair

I am speaking on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB).

We support the AHTEG report that living modified organisms are unpredictable and have possible negative long-term, permanent and irreversible impact on biodiversity and ecosystems. In line with our statement made during the informal session, we would like to reiterate the importance of precautionary approach, the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, the incorporation of our indigenous and local knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies in the risk assessment and risk management of LMOs which has potential adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account risks to human health and socio-economic and cultural impacts.

In the suggested recommendations, the IIFB would like to include the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples from the seven socio-cultural regions recognized by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to participate on the AHTEG to develop additional guidance for risk assessment on living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives to ensure that indigenous peoples free, prior and informed consent of potentially affected indigenous peoples are obtained and the environmental, socio-economic, cultural and ethical impacts are considered.

**III. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS**

*The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting to the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety,*

6. *Decides* to establish an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment, **with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples from the seven socio-cultural regions recognized by the UNPFII**, to develop additional guidance materials on risk assessment for living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives according to the terms of reference annexed hereto;

The IIFB notes the requests to the Executive Secretary but would like to express our concern on the proposed online discussions and online forums and the current negotiations because of the connectivity issues, time zone challenges, and the requirement for Party support for IPLC proposals.

Thank you, Chair.