

Position on Genetic Resources

Background

Biological diversity brings significant benefits to human society and is closely tied to corporate activities. In rapidly progressing global development, it is recognized that the conservation of biological diversity is an important challenge to be addressed for future generations. Biological materials including genetic resources are commonly used in parts of medicines and vaccines.

As one of the legal and policy instruments related to the above, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)^{*1} opened for signature at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and entered into force in 1993. Subsequently, the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety^{*2} entered into force in 2003 and followed by the related Nagoya Protocol^{*3} on access and benefits sharing in 2014.

Our Position

The CBD consists of three objectives; 1) the conservation of biological diversity, 2) the sustainable use of its components, and 3) the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Among other principles, the Nagoya Protocol sets out that a country accessing the genetic resources of another country shall be subject to the prior informed consent by the providing country. The benefits from utilizing these resources shall be shared on mutually agreed terms. Astellas supports these principles of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol.

Astellas deals with living modified organisms (LMOs) in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol, which aims to ensure the safe handling, transport and use of LMOs resulting from modern biotechnology. Recently, new technologies including new breeding technology and genetic engineering have been developed. The effects of the utilization of such technologies on the environment, biological diversity and human health continue to be assessed scientifically. Conferring with academic organizations, national councils, and government authorities, Astellas is committed to managing the use of these technologies in a measured and ethical manner.

References

1. The Convention on Biological Diversity
<https://www.cbd.int/convention/text/>
2. The Cartagena Protocol on biosafety
<http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/text/>
3. The Nagoya Protocol
<https://www.cbd.int/abs/text/default.shtml>