



African Union



NEPAD Planning and  
Coordinating Agency (NPCA)

## ABNE in Africa

### Building a Functional Biosafety System in Mozambique

The government of Mozambique acknowledges the contribution that modern biotechnology can make to meet critical needs for food and nutritional security. At the same time, the government also recognizes that the development of modern biotechnology must go hand-in-hand with appropriate regulations in order to maximize the benefits while minimizing potential risks. Therefore, developing functional biosafety system has become a key priority of the government of Mozambique.

The government has taken positive steps towards achieving this goal, including: i) the ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in December 2001, ii) the establishment of an inter-institutional working group (GIIBS - Grupo Inter-Institucional Sobre Bio-Segurança) in 2002 to serve as the National Biosafety Committee (NBC) followed by the designation of the Ministry of Science and Technology to serve as the National Biosafety Authority, iii) the drafting of biosafety regulations/guidelines in 2007.



The Honorable Minister of Science and Technology of Mozambique requested ABNE to assist GIIBS, Mozambique, Maputo May 2011.

Mozambique is part of the WEMA project, together with Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa. Mock field trials have been conducted in 2010 in Mozambique as part of the training program offered by the WEMA team. Mozambique is also a cotton growing country and faces the same challenges posed by the need to control damaging pests as many other cotton producing countries. Yet, no application for the use of the new agricultural tools has been submitted due to the lack of a regulatory process.

#### ABNE Support to the GIBBS in Mozambique

ABNE is engaged with the Government of Mozambique through the GIIBS to set up a fully functional biosafety system that would allow the country to efficiently regulate the use of agricultural biotechnology towards meeting the current challenges. Table #1 summarizes the ABNE capacity building activities that were carried out for Mozambican regulators from December 2009 to September 2011. Around 50 Mozambican regulators have directly benefited from these ABNE training activities. In addition to this, in May 2011, ABNE provided GIBBS with office supplies in order to facilitate the functioning of the biosafety secretariat, particularly to help with access to internet that will allow GIIBS members to benefit from the network.



Presentation of office supplies to the Honorable Minister of Science and Technology of Mozambique, for the secretariat of GIIBS, Maputo, May 2011.



ABNE and AATF signing a MoU to work together on building a functional biosafety system in Mozambique, Maputo May 2011.

## Main Impact of ABNE interventions in Mozambique

Acknowledging the relevance of ABNE capacity building program in Mozambique and following the recommendations made at the last workshop, the Minister of Science and Technology has requested ABNE to assist GIIBS to review the biosafety legislation (Decree no. 6 of 2007) and finalize the draft Biosafety Regulations that were developed, so as to help the Government address the current needs of the country. ABNE is currently working to meet this request, in collaboration with PBS and AATF. Together, these three organizations are taking up the challenge of building a functional biosafety system in Mozambique, and thereby show a good example of coordinated programs, collaborations and partnerships in Africa.

**Table 1: Summary of ABNE Activities in Mozambique**

Activity	Venue and date	Number of Mozambican regulators / stakeholders empowered
Consultative visit	Maputo, December 2009	-
International meeting in Ouagadougou	Ouagadougou, April 2010	1
Training workshop on CFTs	Maputo, March 2010	30
Environmental Biosafety Short Course	Michigan State University July 2010,	3
Science and Technology communication and Short Course	Michigan State University, August 2010	1
Study tour	South Africa, November 2010 and India, December 2010	2
Technical assistance workshop on Mozambique biosafety regulations	Maputo, May 2011	14
Office supplies	Maputo, May 2011	
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>

## Next areas of focus for ABNE in Mozambique

Completing the process of review of the biosafety bill: The process is in good progress and has reached the stage of public consultation to collect public input necessary to finalize the draft bill. ABNE together with its partners will focus on the completion of this process.

Continue empowering GIIBS member for CFTs application review, inspection and monitoring: It is expected that after completion of the biosafety bill review process, applications for CFTs of the water efficient maize and Bt cotton will be submitted to GIIBS. ABNE will then avail technical assistance to GIIBS to review the applications, conduct inspections and monitor the CFTs trials.

## For more information, please contact:

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