



Tropentag, October 7-9, 2008, Hohenheim

“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:  
New Drive for Rural Development”

## Classical Biological Control and Access and Benefit Sharing Regimes

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### Abstract

Based on the assumption that biodiversity is better protected if benefits from its sustainable use accrue to its owner, the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) introduced two principles. Firstly, countries have sovereign rights over their biodiversity and thus the right to determine ownership, and secondly, 'Access and Benefit Sharing'. Access to biodiversity should be facilitated provided that Benefits arising from sharing are equitably distributed amongst the involved parties.

These sensible principles are confronted with high expectations of a 'green-gold-rush', i.e. high and direct monetary benefits, which has led to complicated, seemingly stalling, negotiations under the CBD. There is therefore a call for a legally binding international regime against a backdrop of many countries implementing their own legislations on ABS, mainly in expectation of a company developing product which generates monetary benefits over many years.

Clearly, this is not the case in the activities of Classical Biological Control, where natural enemies are established by public research institutes, and in essence, contributing to a public good for all.

Conflicts arise from this mismatch of expectations, in terms of speed of research and biocontrol needs, and documentation, which is felt particularly painful by the biocontrol community as they very much work along the lines of the CBD to the benefit of all. Further, there are international regulations and good practices already in place such as those in the IPPC, suiting the increasing application of biocontrol.

The CBD further assumes a bilateral mechanism for Access and Benefit sharing, e.g a country holding a certain species and company or research institute demanding this species. However as many species are distributed over many countries, a multilateral approach is probably more appropriate, such as the one applied in the ITPGRFA.

This talk is to inform a wider scientific public on the issue arising from the ABS regulations and to encourage it to participate in the CBD process. We can only change the situation when we actively approach the decision-makers and national focal points for the CBD/ABS negotiations.

**Keywords:** access and benefit sharing, classical biological control, convention on biological diversity, natural enemies