



Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD

Comité Consultatif Economique et Industriel Auprès de l'OCDE

BIAC proposal for an "unique identifier"

We strongly support the concept of establishing a harmonised system of "unique identifier" for a genetically modified organism approved as a product for commercial purposes in at least one OECD country. Such an identifier will avoid duplication of names when dealing with the same product and it will improve tracking of products globally in a transparent manner.

To ensure practicability the identifier should be a numerical code, starting with number 1. The code refers to a data base where details including a description of the transgenic product and characteristics of the genetic modification would be found. The type and display of information in this database is a separate issue and not part of this proposal.

Certain countries may require additional approvals for stacked products (conventional cross between transgenic plants). In such cases, the identifier should simply be a combination of the identifiers related to the transgenic plants used in the conventional cross.

A key factor will be to define a clear process of "how" and "who" will provide the identifier. A central administration of the whole system seems to be most promising at this early point in time and BIAC proposes that the OECD will take over this role. We would welcome a thorough discussion on the administrative and management aspects, as well as the contents of the data base, once the concept of unique identifier has been established.

BIAC look forward to introducing and developing this proposal further at the OECD Workshop on Unique Identification Systems for Transgenic Plants hosted by the Government of Switzerland.

28 September 2000