

Public Research & Regulation

Foundation with the objective to involve the public research sector in regulations and international agreements relevant to modern biotechnology

MOP3 - PRRI STATEMENT ON LIABILITY

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I speak on behalf of the Foundation for Public Research and Regulation.

Mr. Chairman, a main aim of our participation in this meeting is to make the delegates aware that a substantial part of the research on modern biotechnology is conducted for the public good in public research institutes worldwide. We also hope to make the negotiators aware of the concerns of public researchers that certain proposals on the table may have serious implications for public research and its applications.

One of our concerns, Mr. Chairman, is related to the ongoing debate on liability and redress, about which we have just heard a report. We participated in the expert group on liability under the Convention, which appropriately concluded that some fundamental issues have to be addressed before embarking on developing an international regime or even decide to do so. For example defining what constitutes 'damage to biodiversity'.

The discussion on liability in the expert group under the Protocol, in which we also participated, on the other hand, seems to move ahead without a consideration of these fundamental questions. We urge the Protocol expert group to take a stepwise approach by giving due attention to the debate under the CBD and to the fundamental questions. In addition, Mr. Chairman, we urge that the liability expert group identify means to ensure it is well informed of the science behind the applications they are discussing. We offer our help in identifying public researchers who can address the group at its next meeting to provide scientific explanations about issues under discussion.

Thank you Mr. Chairman