

IOBC-O-26. PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND COMMUNICATION ABOUT GM PLANTS: BRAZIL CASE OF STUDY UNDER UMBRELLA OF LAC BIOSAFETY PROJECT.

O.M.N. Arantes*,***, **Deise M.F. Capalbo***, J.M.F.J. Silveira**, I.C. Borges**, D.R.S. Schneider*,****, **N.C. Gattaz***, **E.S. Lima***

*Embrapa Environment, CP 69, Jaguariúna / SP. deise@cnpma.embrapa.br

**State University of Campinas, Faculty of Economy, Campinas / SP;

***Consultant

****PhD fellowship.

The project *Latin America: Multi-Country Capacity Building for Compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* – LAC-Biosafety, is an initiative for cooperation among mega-biodiverse countries - Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru. It is financially supported by the Global Environment Facility – GEF through the World Bank under general coordination of the International Center for Tropical Agriculture - CIAT. The objective of the project is to strengthen technical capacity in scientific knowledge generation and in communication, to support informed biosafety decision-making in compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety – CPB. The communication component represents a new

challenge to be developed as it aims to reinforce the capacity in communication raising public awareness on biosafety in Latin America in general, and specifically in the four participating countries. The focus of this presentation will be on Brazil's experience and challenges faced till now. There are currently 19 transgenic varieties growing in Brazil and the population's risk perception was analyzed by some authors such as Massarani and Moreira (2005), Guivant (2006) and Gonzales et al (2009a and b). Eventhough, the risk perception of the general public for the LAC Biosafety project is groundbreaking in the sense that it explicitly has to incorporate stakeholders consult in order to develop a sustainable strategic communication. In Brazil, the conceptual model adopted considered that the decision-making, the public's perception, the autonomy of decision and the subjective knowledge is the result of a combination of scientific information, objective knowledge and culture-such as beliefs and values. For the general public it was provided an online questionnaire (1442 respondents) to detect the general public perception of biosafety of GM plants and its regulations. And for the organized civil society/public institutions involved with decision making for the release and marketing of GM plants, the selected strategy was in-depth structured interviews. In this last case the aim was to identify: the perception about the proposed project activities; the reflections of such activities at country level; and provide the information needs detected, based on scientific results offered by the scientific team of the project. The results obtained are going to be presented at the IOBC/NTRS - SISA 2011 Joint Meeting. Emphasis will be applied in the strategy developed and the challenge that the project members face now to develop products to fulfill the information required and to raise the public perception, through a balanced and clear product for communication.