



The International Industrial Biotechnology Network (IIBN)

Established with the support of UNIDO and the Government of Flanders, Belgium

CHARTER

The **International Industrial Biotechnology Network (IIBN)** is a cooperation network jointly established by the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Headquarters, Vienna, Austria** and the **International Plant Biotechnology Outreach (IPBO), VIB-Ghent University, Belgium**, set up within the framework of UNIDO's Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Agribusiness Programs, with support from the **Government of Flanders, Belgium**.

IIBN aims to foster the science-based, safe and responsible application of biotechnology tools and processes for sustainable development of emerging and developing economies.

Biotechnology products and technologies hold tremendous potential to help address society's grand challenges such as food security, more sustainable management of natural resources, while at the same time also enhancing economic and social well-being.

The Flanders Region of Belgium has made a global contribution to agricultural innovation, most notably the development of biotechnology-based crop improvement tools in the 1980's. Flanders has since become a region of excellence in agricultural biotechnology combining academic and industrial strengths. To recognize the global impact of agricultural biotechnology, the 2013 World Food Prize was awarded to Prof. em. Marc Van Montagu (VIB-Ghent University, Belgium) and two co-laureates for "contributing significantly to increasing the quantity and availability of food".

Since its inception in 2010, IIBN has fostered new partnerships and activities, and has also facilitated capacity building through specialized training.

To amplify IIBN's activities and expand its knowledge base, five institutions¹ agreed on 13 November 2013 at the '*Forum on Global Agriculture and Forestry*', in Gent, Belgium to cooperate as IIBN Founding Members to improve science and technology collaboration and transfer in biotechnology between knowledge institutions, businesses, governments and other stakeholders in developing countries, transition economies, and industrialized nations. The **Ghent Declaration** was approved (Annex 1) and this Charter was on the basis thereof finalized.

¹ The Science and Technology Centre Ukraine, Ukraine; Embrapa, Brazil; the Guangxi Academy of Sciences, China; the African Union NEPAD Agency African Biosafety Network of Expertise, Burkina Faso; and the Institute of Plant Biotechnology Outreach, VIB-Ghent University, Belgium

Article 1. NAME

The global network established through this Charter is called the International Industrial Biotechnology Network.

For the purposes of this Charter and Network, 'Industrial Biotechnology' refers to industrial development resulting from innovations in biotechnology applications, services, and products. It embraces different types of industries in the agricultural, forestry, chemical, materials and energy sectors, consumer goods, health products, and others as well as enabling regulatory and legal environments.

Article 2. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

IIBN's mission is to facilitate access to and maximize the application of innovations in industrial biotechnology for the social, economic, and environmental benefit of emerging and developing countries.

Article 2.1 Objectives

Specific objectives of IIBN are:

- A. To enable and contribute to the effective and efficient development, application, adaptation, and replication of industrial biotechnology in developing and transition economies; and
- B. To facilitate effective North-South, South-South, and South-North-South cooperation.

Article 2.2 Key functions and activities

1. IIBN accomplishes its objectives by undertaking the following key functions:
 - A. Provide and disseminate science-based information to raise awareness and improve the understanding of the potential sustainability benefits (social, environmental, and economic) of innovations in biotechnology, particularly in developing and emerging economies;
 - B. Facilitate capacity building in biotechnology in emerging and developing countries to empower local stakeholders, strengthen ownership, and facilitate informed and autonomous decision making, thereby enabling '*Freedom to Innovate*';
 - C. Foster international Science and Technology cooperation for biotechnology applications and products addressing the needs of emerging and developing countries.

2. The key activities and/or services of IIBN include but are not limited to:
 - A. Facilitate joint projects;
 - B. Engage in information dissemination;
 - C. Foster training and skills development; and
 - D. Enter into public dialogue.

3. IIBN undertakes activities and/or services that:
 - A. Are demand driven;
 - B. Demonstrate potential to contribute to poverty alleviation/food security, in particular in developing countries;
 - C. Demonstrate potential for contributing to the three dimensions of sustainable development: social well-being (*People*); environmental protection (*Planet*); and economic development (*Prosperity*);
 - D. Incorporate innovation based on bioscience and/or biotechnology;
 - E. Engage in and strengthen (international) partnerships with actors along the value chain including the private sector; and
 - F. Can be replicated and/or transferred within and between developing regions.

Article 3. PARTICIPATING ENTITIES AND MEMBERSHIP

IIBN is constituted of Members, Associate Members, and Patron Agencies. IIBN furthermore recognizes Experts.

Article 3.1 Members

1. IIBN aims to create a multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary network. IIBN seeks to follow a value chain approach from feedstock to end product for its activities and projects. As such, IIBN welcomes actors along the entire value chain, in addition to providers or users of biotechnology tools and processes.

2. IIBN has two types of members:
 - A. Members: non-profit organizations or initiatives that are committed to contributing to IIBN's activities and functions by delivering biotechnology and related services, products, or knowledge for the public good and the private interest of developing and emerging countries. IIBN Members can be public (non-profit R&D institutions, academia or universities), governmental (intergovernmental agencies or non-governmental organizations), foundations, regional and local authorities, technology platforms and other networks, industry associations or clusters, Professional Associations or Chambers of Commerce.

 - B. Associate Members: for-profit and any other organization or initiative that is committed to contributing to IIBN's activities and functions, but that is unable to become a regular member. Associate Members include, amongst others: micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, international corporations, and development and financial institutions.

3. IIBN makes a specific effort to foster cooperation and knowledge sharing among its Members and other participating entities.
4. The conduct of all Members of IIBN is governed by a Code of Conduct, established jointly with this Charter. Conformance with the Code of Conduct is monitored by the Founders Committee of IIBN.

Article 3.2 Patron Agencies

1. The Economy, Science, and Innovation Department of the Government of Flanders and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization are recognized as the Founding Patron Agencies of IIBN.
2. The Founders Committee of IIBN decides upon the acceptance and termination of new Patron Agencies additional to the Founding Patron Agencies.

Article 3.3 Experts

1. An Expert is an individual who commits to support the operations and activities of the IIBN network, through his/her scientific or industry knowledge, as a researcher, practitioner, investor and/or policy maker.

Article 4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

IIBN has a governance structure consisting of a Founders Committee and a Secretariat.

Article 4.1 The Founders Committee

1. The Founders Committee guides and administers IIBN's activities and projects taking full consideration of the IIBN Charter, the associated Code of Conduct, and in conformity with the mandate and procedures of the organization providing support to the IIBN Secretariat.
2. The Founders Committee will:
 - A. Develop the annual work plan with due consideration for the inputs and service delivery capacity of the IIBN Members and the organization(s) supporting the IIBN Secretariat
 - B. Receive, analyze, and distribute reports from the Secretariat
 - C. Actively promote and disseminate IIBN activities and reports, and call for interest on joint activities
 - D. Constitute permanent or ad hoc committees, e.g. a technical committee to prioritize or evaluate IIBN projects, and any other committee as deemed appropriate. These committees will have an advisory function

- E. Organize a Founders Committee meeting at least once per year
3. The Founders Committee is composed of four of the IIBN Founding Members (Embrapa, Brazil; the Guangxi Academy of Sciences, China; the African Union NEPAD Agency African Biosafety Network of Expertise, Burkina Faso; and the International Plant Biotechnology Outreach, VIB-Ghent University, Belgium) and the two founding Patron Agencies (the Department of Economy, Science, and Innovation of the Government of Flanders; and UNIDO).
4. Members of the Founders Committee can withdraw at their own request by giving three months notice to all other current members of the Founders Committee.
5. The Founders Committee assumes responsibility for the preparation of a by-law with a representative governance structure for the IIBN to be presented to and approved by all Members of the IIBN on or before 31st December 2016, whereafter the duties of the Founders Committee will be transferred to the governing body created by the foresaid by-law.

Article 4.2 The Secretariat

1. The organization that supports the day-to-day activities of the IIBN in accordance with this Charter and facilitates the work of the Founders Committee will be acknowledged as the Secretariat.
2. The organization providing support to the IIBN Secretariat, determines in consultation with the Founders Committee what specific activities the Secretariat will perform. The Secretariat will, amongst others, develop an annual work plan and maintain a calendar of events.
3. The Founders Committee will appoint one of its members to provide the Secretariat. The International Plant Biotechnology Outreach (VIB-Ghent University, Belgium) has assumed the role of Secretariat for the IIBN during the establishment period of the IIBN.

Article 5. FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. Possible sources of financing for the activities of the IIBN are: project financing, revenues from meetings, grants and special contributions, sponsorship of events, and any other appropriate sources.
2. For financial management of the IIBN projects and activities, specific accounts can be created that are managed by the IIBN Secretariat or by any other IIBN member(s) under their respective legal identity, taking full consideration of the applicable financial rules and regulations of that organization(s).

Article 6. FINAL CLAUSES

Article 6.1 Effective Date

The IIBN comes into effect upon endorsement of this Charter by the four Founding Members and the Two Founding Patron Agencies on the day and year first written on the signature pages.

Article 6.2 Signatures of the representatives of the parties

See separate signature pages.

Article 6.3 Amendments

This Charter can be amended by a majority vote of the IIBN Founders Committee, for subsequent endorsement by all Members at the time of change of the Charter.



The International Industrial Biotechnology Network (IIBN)
Established with the support of UNIDO and the Government of Flanders, Belgium

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is endorsed as part of the Charter of IIBN at its effective date, and, in accordance with Article 3.1.4 of the Charter it provides the Code of Conduct to which all Members of the IIBN are required to pledge and comply with.

The objective of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that the Members of IIBN act in the spirit of international cooperation with commitment to foster sustainable development and meet the highest levels of professional conduct and ethical standards related to the promotion and implementation of IIBN.

This Code of Conduct also relates to knowledge sharing, advocacy of IIBN matters and personal conduct. It applies to all Members, Associate Members, Patron Agencies and Experts.

The Code is guided by the main principle that IIBN Members will adhere to professionalism and commitment to the IIBN principles.

Specifically, a Member of IIBN shall ensure that its officers:

1. Pledge to act in the interest of promoting and implementing IIBN concepts, methods, policies, practices and technologies and to support the attainment of international sustainable development goals and commitments
2. Pledge their commitment to the IIBN and to the observance of its Charter and Code of Conduct
3. Will disseminate any information obtained through IIBN amongst the stakeholder and constituencies of the Member, such as business, governments and other service providers
4. Provide regular information and share knowledge and experiences on specific topics that are being addressed by IIBN
5. Ensure that the impact of the implementation of IIBN concepts, methods, policies, practices and technologies on enterprises and other organizations is monitored, measured and shared with IIBN

6. Promote IIBN concepts, methods, policies, practices, and technologies among its stakeholders and constituencies, including business, governments, and other service providers
7. Provide factual and relevant information when promoting the work of the Member or of its officers
8. Refrain from using or permitting to use the acronym, logo of IIBN inappropriately
9. Refrain from giving IIBN false, inaccurate, or misleading information at any time
10. Operate the business and practice of the Member in such a manner to reflect generally accepted professional conduct

Breaches of this Code of Conduct

Any breach of this Code of Conduct, brought to the attention of IIBN will be considered by the IIBN Founders Committee as a reason to terminate the membership. Members shall also ensure that they notify the Founders Committee of any significant violation of this Code by another Member of IIBN.