

## **Submission of the Government of Australia**

### **Input to development of the Strategic Plan of the Convention, particularly with respect to draft elements relating to the Protocol**

Australia considers that development of the Strategic Plan of the Convention provides an opportunity to focus strategically on innovative ways that the CBD could engage with the broader international community and intervene to ensure biodiversity conservation. While recognising the importance of the range of work programs and decisions already agreed by Parties, Australia believes it would be more constructive and forward looking for the Plan to avoid restatement of them and instead outline future action that could be undertaken.

Australia does not consider it appropriate to include specific reference to the Biosafety Protocol in the Strategic Plan for similar reasons and also because the Protocol is a separate legal instrument to the Convention, conceivably with a different membership. On entry into force the Protocol will be subject to the decisions of countries party to it. Ultimate success in achieving the Protocol's objectives will fall to those Parties and not to members of the Convention.

A specific concern that Australia has with the draft text in square brackets relating to the Protocol<sup>1</sup>, is that it implies that the worldwide application of the Biosafety Protocol is the only means to achieve the safe transboundary movement of LMOs and therefore achieve protection of biodiversity. Many countries, however, have advanced domestic regulatory systems, and international agreements such as the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (SPS) also provide protection for plant and animal health.

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<sup>1</sup> "Living Modified Organisms that may have an adverse effect of the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account human health, are transferred, handled, and used in a safe manner through the full and world wide application of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety" (UNEP/CBD/MSP/L.2).