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**Cc:** Isabelle Coche  
**Subject:** CBD online forum update

Hi all,

Topic 1 of the CBD online forum (“Reviewing recent technological developments within the field of synthetic biology to assess if the developments could lead to impacts on biodiversity and the three objectives of the Convention, including unexpected and significant impacts”) is **now closed**. A big thank you to all who participated and helped to make it such a lively and interesting discussion! A summary of the main points will be drafted by the moderator and circulated over the coming weeks.

**Discussion on Topic 2: “Evidence of benefits and adverse effects of organisms, components and products of synthetic biology vis-à-vis the three objectives of the Convention” will run from July 17<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>.** As the goal of this discussion is to collect concrete evidence, all those contributing are encouraged to reference appropriate publications/websites/etc... in their submission to support their claims.

#### Summary of Discussions so far:

- Several participants have advanced the claim that the benefits and adverse effects of synbio technologies will not differ hugely from those developed through other techniques.
  - Boet Glandorf, Netherlands: <https://bch.cbd.int/synbio/open-ended/discussion/?threadid=8598#8601>
  - Jeremy Sweet, JT Environmental Consultants: <https://bch.cbd.int/synbio/open-ended/discussion/?threadid=8598#8605>
- There has also been some on back and forth on what exactly constitutes a “real” synbio organism, with some claiming it applies to any organism with synthetic nucleotides (or its offspring) (e.g. <https://bch.cbd.int/synbio/open-ended/discussion/?threadid=8598#8610>), while others have problematized the synthetic/natural dichotomy by pointing out that in many cases the results of processes like PCR (involving

extraction of DNA from natural hosts) and chemical synthesis are indistinguishable, and called for those using such terms to contextualise them so that non-experts reading the forum may have a better grasp what points are being made (e.g. <https://bch.cbd.int/synbio/open-ended/discussion/?threadid=8598#8606>)

Regards,  
Ben



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**CBD Online Forum on Synthetic Biology will take place soon!** Experts should [register online](#) to participate. Contact us if you require assistance.

Supporter of the Manyinga orphan schools project – find out more at [www.manyinga.org](http://www.manyinga.org)