In its decision 15/31, the Conference of Parties (COP) established a process for broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment of the most recent developments in synthetic biology. The COP requested the Executive Secretary to convene online discussions of the Open-Ended Online Forum on Synthetic Biology to support the information gathering step of the horizon scanning process. Thus, two topics were chosen for discussion of the online forum:

1. Trends within the field of synthetic biology; and
2. Points to consider for carrying out the process for broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment of most recent technological developments on synthetic biology.

*Topic 1*

The first topic aims to inform the work of the multidisciplinary AHTEG and their work on the trends of synthetic biology that could inform the process for broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment. In their report, the 2019 AHTEG on Synthetic Biology identified a non-exhaustive list of trends in synthetic biology (kindly refer to the main page of the forum). Thus, to assist with better understanding the current situation of these identified trends:

Question 1a

**What are some examples of near-future applications? What is the timeframe either for release, either for research or commercialization of the applications (0 to 5 years; 5 to 10 years; 10+ years)?**

Question 1 b

**What could be potential positive and the potential negative impacts vis-à-vis the three objectives of the Convention arising from such applications?**

*Topic 2*

Under the second topic, information gathered will support the work of the multidisciplinary AHTEG with the process of broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment. When establishing the process the COP specified that the process should consist of the following steps:

1. Information gathering;
2. Compilation, organization and synthesis of information;
3. Assessment; and
4. Reporting on outcomes.

Further, the COP specified that steps (a) and (b) would be coordinated by the Secretariat with the support of consultants (as appropriate); step (c) would be carried out for the multidisciplinary AHTEG; and step (d) would be done by the multidisciplinary AHTEG, the SBSTTA and the COP.

Question 2 a

**Thus, in relation to the process outlined above, what particular points should be considered when carrying out each step?**

Question 2 b

**Participants are invited share information on methodologies and approaches that have been used for other horizon scanning processes that you believe could be useful for the horizon scanning on synthetic biology under the CBD and provide examples when possible.**