




**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

FAO questionnaire results on genetically modified food safety assessment

Global stock-taking exercise of the national situations,
September 2019



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Contents

List of tables	iv
Abstract.....	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	vii
1 Questionnaire response rate	1
1.1 Total questionnaire response rate	1
1.2 Regional response rate.....	1
2 Questionnaire results by question.....	1
2.1 Responding countries.....	1
2.2 Platform community members	2
2.3 Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment.....	2
2.4 Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment	5
2.5 Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment.....	9
2.6 Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment	10
2.7 Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points.....	11
2.8 Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points.....	13
2.9 Communications between platform focal points and decision makers.....	25
2.10 Communications between platform focal points and decision makers.....	28
2.11 Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers	35
2.12 Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers	38
2.13 Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment	44
2.14 How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment	47
2.15 Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform	49
2.16 Main challenges in conducting GM food safety assessments (Only in Questionnaire A)	52
2.17 Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP (Only in Questionnaire B)	59
2.18 Areas of expertise and countries offering support (Only in Questionnaire B).....	60
2.19 Observations and comments	60

List of tables

Table 1. Total questionnaire response rate	1
Table 2. Response rates to the questionnaire by region	1
Table 3. A list of responding countries	1
Table 4. Responsibility to the platform	2
Table 5. Responsibility to the platform (Other response).....	2
Table 6. Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment.....	2
Table 7. Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment (Other responses).....	3
Table 8. Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment.....	6
Table 9. Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment (Other responses).....	6
Table 10. Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment.....	9
Table 11. Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment (Other responses)	9
Table 12. Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment	10
Table 13. Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment (Other responses)	10
Table 14. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points.....	11
Table 15. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points (Other responses)	11
Table 16. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points.....	13
Table 17. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers	25
Table 18. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers (Other responses)..	25
Table 19. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers	28
Table 20. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers.....	36
Table 21. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers (Other responses)..	36
Table 22. Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers.....	38
Table 23. Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment	44
Table 24. Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment (other responses)	44
Table 25. How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment.....	47
Table 26. How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment (Other responses).....	47
Table 27. Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform	50
Table 28. Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform (Other responses)	50
Table 29. Main challenges in conducting GM food safety assessments	52
Table 30. Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP	59
Table 31. Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP (Other responses)	59
Table 32. Areas of expertise and countries offering support.....	60
Table 33. Areas of expertise and countries offering support (Other responses).....	60
Table 34. Observations and comments.....	60

Abstract

In 2008, the Codex Alimentarius members agreed that it is important for countries to globally share the results of genetically modified (GM) food safety assessment and subsequently the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is hosting an online database entitled FAO GM Foods Platform (<http://www.fao.org/gm-platform>) to share the relevant data. As of September 2019, only 23 out of 189 Codex members have been able to share the relevant data. In July 2019, in order to understand the challenges countries may be facing in conducting GM food safety assessment, two separate sets of questionnaires were sent to all 189 Codex members. Questionnaire A was sent to 166 Codex members who had not shared any GM food safety assessment result on the platform, while questionnaire B was sent to those 23 Codex members who have been actively sharing the GM food safety assessment results on the platform. A total of 116 Codex members responded between July and September 2019. All responses are recorded as they were received, including possible grammatical and spelling mistakes. While the present document is a simple compilation of the responses, a complete analysis of the results was made and integrated in to another FAO publication entitled Reality of GM food safety: Are we effectively evaluating it? Technical background paper for the FAO GM Foods Platform Community Meeting 2019.

Keywords: Food safety, risk assessment, safety assessment, genetically modified organism (GMO), biosafety, regulatory framework, questionnaire, Codex Alimentarius, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), FAO GM Foods Platform

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CCAFRICA	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa
CCASIA	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia
CCEURO	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe
CCLAC	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
CCNE	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Near East
CCNASWP	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GM	Genetically modified
GMO	Genetically modified organism
LLP	Low level Presence
MS	Member state
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

1 Questionnaire response rate

1.1 Total questionnaire response rate

Table 1. Total questionnaire response rate

Questionnaire type	Number of countries the questionnaire was sent	Responses received	Response rate
Questionnaire A	166	98	59%
Questionnaire B	23	18	78%
Overall response rate			61%

1.2 Regional response rate

Table 2. Response rates to the questionnaire by region

Region	Codex Region (total number)	Responses received	Response rate
Africa	CCAFRICA (49)	31	63%
Asia	CCASIA (24)	16	67%
Europe (including European Union)	CCEURO (52)	31	60%
Latin America and the Caribbean	CCLAC (33)	16	48%
North America and Southwest Pacific	CCNASWP (14)	8	57%
Near East	CCNE (17)	14	82%
Overall response rate			61%

2 Questionnaire results by question

2.1 Responding countries

Question: Please indicate your country.

Table 3. A list of responding countries

Algeria	Gabon	Nigeria
Angola	Gambia	Panama
Antigua and Barbuda	Georgia	Papua New Guinea
Argentina	Germany	Paraguay
Armenia	Ghana	Peru
Australia	Greece	Philippines
Azerbaijan	Grenada	Poland
Bahrain	Guyana	Portugal
Bangladesh	Honduras	Qatar
Belarus	Indonesia	Romania
Bhutan	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Rwanda
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Iraq	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ireland	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Botswana	Israel	Samoa
Bulgaria	Italy	Sao Tome and Principe
Burkina Faso	Jamaica	Senegal
Burundi	Japan	Serbia
Cabo Verde	Kenya	Singapore
Cambodia	Kiribati	Slovakia
Cameroon	Kuwait	South Sudan

Canada	Latvia	Spain
Central African Republic	Lebanon	Sri Lanka
Chile	Liberia	Sudan
China	Libya	Syrian Arab Republic
Congo	Lithuania	Tanzania
Côte d'Ivoire	Luxembourg	Thailand
Croatia	Madagascar	Timor-Leste
Cyprus	Malawi	Togo
Czechia	Malaysia	Tunisia
Denmark	Maldives	Turkey
Dominica	Mali	Uganda
Ecuador	Mauritius	United Arab Emirates
Egypt	Mongolia	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Eritrea	Montenegro	
Eswatini	Myanmar	United States of America
European Union	Namibia	Uruguay
Fiji	Nepal	Yemen
Finland	Netherlands	Zambia
France	New Zealand	Zimbabwe

2.2 Platform community members

Question: Please select one option that explains your responsibility to the platform (only one answer possible).

- A. Focal point
- B. Alternate focal point
- C. Other (Please indicate it in the space below)

Table 4. Responsibility to the platform

Answer	Numbers	Response rate
A. Focal point	103	89%
B. Alternate Focal point	12	10%
C. Other	1	1%

Table 5. Responsibility to the platform (Other response)

#	Country	Response
1.	Namibia	National biosafety registrar; biotechnology manager

2.3 Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment

Question: Please select one option that best explains your country situation in relation to the process of conducting, reviewing and sharing GM food safety assessment results (Only one answer possible).

- A. My country has only one competent authority/agency that is tasked to conduct, review and/or share GM food safety assessment results.
- B. My country has multiple competent authorities/agencies that are tasked to conduct, review and/or share GM food safety assessment results.
- C. My country does not have a regulatory framework that requires a competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
- D. My country is in the process in developing a regulatory framework that requires a competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
- E. Other (Please indicate it in the space below)

Table 6. Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment

Answer	Number	Response rate
A. One competent authority	36	31%
B. Multiple competent authority	23	20%
C. No regulatory framework to do the assessment	19	16%
D. In the process of developing the framework	18	16%
E. Other	20	17%
Total	116	100%

Table 7. Institutional set-ups to conduct GM food safety assessment (Other responses)

#	Country	Responses
1	Antigua and Barbuda	Antigua and Barbuda has developed draft legislation (primary and secondary) to manage biosafety and biotechnology issues in general. It is expected that the work of the competent authorities would include the conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
2	Bangladesh	My country has developed the guidelines for the safety assessment of foods derived from genetically engineered crops which has been adopted by the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institutions (BSTI). However, regulatory framework for the safety assessment of GM foods is yet to be established.
3	Canada	Health Canada is the authority that conducts review of GM foods. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) conducts similar review of GM products used for animal feed and considers human health implications in their assessments.
4	Denmark	Denmark is a member of the European Union and therefore risk assessment of GMO's is performed mainly by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). We have additionally one national authority working with GM food safety assessment.
5	France	My country has multiple competent agencies that are tasked to conduct GM safety assessment with one specialized in GM food safety assessment (ANSES - French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety). As a member state of the European Union, GM food safety assessment is also conducted by EFSA (European Food safety Authority). See for more detail the answer of the European Commission.
6	Ireland	As a member of the European Union, Ireland does not carry out risk assessments of GM food. This work is carried out by the European Food Safety Authority
7	Israel	In Israel GM foods are considered as novel food, which is the responsibility of the MOH, cultivation and field studies risk assessment and authorization is the responsibility of the ministry of agriculture. To date we didn't conduct risk assessment of GM foods.
8	Latvia	As Latvia is a part of the European Union, we apply the European Union legislation in the field of GMO and GM food risk assessment is conducted and reviewed by EFSA. In Latvia we have GMO expert committee involved in GMO risk assessment process at national bases according to the EU legislation.
9	Mali	Mali has a national food safety agency with the mission of safety assessment of Food for humans and animals; currently the agency does not have the expertise for the evaluation of GM food safety assessment
10	Netherlands	Within Europe, we have a national GM food safety assessment within the frame of the European approval system, the national assessment, via the Dutch national competent authorities, provides input into the European food safety assessment by EFSA

11	Peru	<p>A través del Decreto Supremo N° 008-2012-MINAN, se aprueba el Reglamento de la Ley que establece la Moratoria al Ingreso y Producción de Organismos Vivos Modificados al Territorio Nacional por un período de 10 años. El Ministerio del Ambiente es el Centro Nacional en el contexto de la Ley N° 29811 y con arreglo al Protocolo de Cartagena que promueve el logro de su finalidad a través de la generación de capacidades que permitan cumplir con los requerimientos de bioseguridad en forma eficaz y transparente, con los mecanismos de protección y fomento a la biodiversidad nativa, en el período de diez (10) años.</p> <p>English translation:</p> <p>Through the Supreme Decree N° 008-2012-MINAN, the moratorium on the import and production of genetically modified foods within the national territory was approved for a period of ten years. The Ministry of Environment is the national center in the context of law N° 29811 and the Cartagena Protocol, and it promotes its goals by building capacities through which biosafety requirements can be effectively and transparently achieved through mechanisms that protect and promote native biodiversity.</p>
12	Poland	<p>Poland is a member state of the European Union and the regulation of GM food takes place at European Union level. Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and include a detailed study of potential for toxic, nutritional and allergenic effects. During the evaluation of applications EFSA consults the Competent Authorities of the member states. Authorizations are issued by the European Commission on European Union - wide basis. Refer the questionnaire completed by the European Union</p>
13	Portugal	<p>As a member of the European Union, Portugal complies with the European Union legislation regarding GM food.</p>
14	Qatar	<p>No activity available regarding GM food safety assessment with Qatar. The action taken by MoPH at the point of entry to check the consignment if it is complying with the GMO- GSO standard.</p>
15	Romania	<p>Romania follows the European Union legislation in this field and mostly base the decisions on EFSA's safety assessments in the field of GM food</p>
16	Serbia	<p>My country has total ban on GM food and feed since adoption of new GMO law in 2009. That ban was introduced in parliament procedure, contrary to draft Law prepared by experts and relevant ministry in charge of GMO (ministry in charge of agriculture), and contrary to Law Proposal sent to the Parliament by Serbian Government. Law from 2009 is main obstacle for Serbia accession to WTO and it is not in compliance with Serbia European Union obligations (Serbia is candidate country for accession to European Union and must harmonize its GMO legislation with European Union legislation). From 2001 to 2009. Serbia had GMO law that allowed all types of applications (commercial growing, GM food, GM feed, field trials and contained use) and only one authority was in charge for all types of applications – ministry responsible for agriculture. In that ministry, national committee for biosafety was responsible for application evaluations and evaluation of risk assessments. It consisted of several experts with different fields of expertise (molecular biologists, agronomists, ecologists, evolutionary biologists, taxonomists, nutritionists, toxicologists, allergists, and others). Under the new law, expert council for biosafety has similar composition and duties, and it is expected that it will resume all previous tasks (including assessment of GM food) after our</p>

		legislation being harmonized with European Union legislation. In 2001-09 period were no approvals for cultivation or placing on the market of GM food. There was one approval for GM feed (roundup-ready soybean meal for period of 10 years) and several approved GMO field trials (NK603 corn, GM Arabidopsis thaliana and GM tobacco). It is expected that GMO legislation in Serbia would be changed to fulfill requests of WTO and European Union memberships, but there is serious opposition to that change in Serbian public and that decision is political.
17	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. Spain is a member state in the European Union. The procedure for food safety assessment is regulated on regulation (EC) 1820/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on genetically modified food and feed. Genetically modified food and feed only can be authorized for placing on the community market after a scientific evaluation of the highest possible standard, to be undertaken under the responsibility of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), of any risks which they present for human and animal health and, as the case may be, for the environment. This scientific evaluation should be followed by a risk management decision by the European Union, under a regulatory procedure ensuring close cooperation between the commission and the member states. Our national risk assessment body (National Commission of Biosafety) also carries out a safety assessment of the notification and sends their conclusion or questions to EFSA. The National Commission of Biosafety includes experts from different ministries and also external scientific experts. National Commission of Biosafety has regular meeting during each year (one a month). When it is necessary, extraordinary online meeting may be hold. Once EFSA assessment of food safety is available, decision makers adopt the country position taking into account this report and the comments provided by the National Commission of Biosafety on this EFSA report.
18	Thailand	My country is in the process in developing a regulation and regulatory framework that requires the competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food. However, at present, my country has a competent authority, Food and Drug Administration, MOAC that tasked to conduct GM food safety assessment with the voluntary basis. The review of information is done with engagement of external experts.
19	Tunisia	My country is recently nominated (the new food law) a competent agency that will be charged to conduct and review food safety assessment and which included safety assessment of GM food
20	Uganda	Uganda is in the process of developing a regulatory framework that requires the competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food. Presently, this work is conducted by the National Biosafety Committee, a multi-disciplinary committee comprising relevant government ministries, departments and agencies, research and academia, civil society, private sector, and farmer organizations. In addition, some Research organizations conducting work on GM have institutional biosafety committees that are required to report to the competent authority.

2.4 Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment

Question: Please select one option that explains your country situation in relation to the engagement of experts for conducting, reviewing and sharing GM food safety assessment (Only one answer possible).

1. GM food safety assessment is conducted, reviewed and shared without any engagement of external reviewers and/or experts.
2. GM food safety assessment is conducted, reviewed and shared with the engagement of external reviewers and/or experts.
3. Other (Please indicate it in the space below)

Table 8. Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment

Answer	Number	Response rate
A. Without any engagement of external experts	12	10%
B. With engagement of external experts	46	40%
C. Other	58	50%

Table 9. Engagement of external experts during GM food safety assessment (Other responses)

#	Country	Responses
1	Algeria	There is no engagement of experts for conducting, reviewing and sharing GM food safety management. The installation of the laboratory for detection of GMOs (Constantine biotechnology center) since 2015 provides insights into the development of a framework for GMO food control and risk management.
2	Angola	We expect to have the necessary support to perform the food safety assessment.
3	Antigua and Barbuda	Not applicable
4	Armenia	GM food safety assessment is in the process in developing a regulatory framework to conducting, reviewing and sharing information.
5	Australia	Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) does not engage experts for conducting, reviewing or sharing food safety assessments. FSANZ does however consult stakeholders during the assessment process, which may include experts. During this consultation process, stakeholders may submit comments on a draft GM food safety assessment.
6	Azerbaijan	My country is in the process.
7	Bangladesh	I did not select answer one or two of question 3.
8	Belarus	Until now, GM organisms developed in the Republic of Belarus, which will become the basis of GM food, have not been placed on the country's market. According to the law "On Safety in Genetic Engineering Activities" risk assessment of GM organisms is performed twice: before the first release into the environment for environmental testing and before registering a new GMO intended for economic purposes. In the first case, 9 assessments were conducted by the Expert Council under the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus without engagement of external experts but with engagement of external materials, e.g. OECD consensus documents on plant species biology. In addition, the Guidelines for Risk Assessment of the Republic of Belarus are based on the guidelines of international organizations, including FAO. Use of non-pathogenic genetically engineered organisms for economic purposes is allowed after their State Registration by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus. State Registration shall be exercised upon a positive decision of the State Safety Expertise of GMOs and positive test results of GMOs under their release into the environment. Both abovementioned risk assessments includes an assessment of potential allergenicity and toxicity of GMOs.
9	Bhutan	Did not get any application so far

10	Burkina Faso	Until now no information is available about any GM food assessment already conducted in our country because there is no coordination between technical departments in charge of food safety in the country.
11	Burundi	I am not among those who choose the 1st or 2nd option of the Q3
12	Cameroon	GM food safety assessment is not conducted, reviewed and shared with the engagement of external reviews and/or experts.
13	Central African Republic	My country does not have a regulatory framework that requires the competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
14	Chile	GM food safety assessment was partially reviewed from 2008-2010
15	Côte d'Ivoire	In current law, the presence of GM foods is prohibited. Also, we have the experts, but we don't have the materials to carry out conformity assessment
16	Dominica	GM food safety assessment is not conducted
17	Ecuador	GM foods safety assessment is not conducted in our country, the academy is working only in investigatory project
18	Egypt	My country is in the process in developing a regulatory framework that requires the competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
19	Eritrea	My country is in the process to start food safety assessments.
20	Eswatini	The law dictates that GM food assessment should be conducted, reviewed and shared with engagement of external reviews and experts, but so far none has been done pending the publicizing of the regulations
21	Fiji	N/A
22	Finland	In Finland, the competent authority to conduct, review and share the GM food assessments is the Finnish Food Authority. Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Normally the Finnish Food Authority doesn't use external reviews or experts, but this is also possible, if necessary.
23	Gabon	GM food safety assessment is not conducted because
24	Gambia	My country does not allow the import or growth of GM foods, therefore no assessment is being done at the moment
25	Georgia	there are existing competent authority in Georgia which is responsible for food safety assessment, including GM food assessment, however till now GM food safety assessment is not conducted
26	Germany	In Germany, the competent authority to conduct GM food safety assessments is the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL). BVL is an authority under the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). In conducting its assessments, BVL consults the following other national authorities: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), Julius Kühn Institute - Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants (JKI), Robert Koch Institute (RKI), and – in specific cases- Friedrich Loeffler Institute – Federal Research Institute for Animal Health (FLI).
27	Guyana	No assessment is currently conducted
28	Ireland	Not applicable
29	Israel	Once the novel food regulations will be approved by the parliament, the committee will include experts from the academia as external experts.
30	Jamaica	The focal point has faced great challenge in engaging external reviews and experts.
31	Kuwait	We are in process of conducting, reviewing and sharing GM food safety assessment
32	Latvia	-

33	Lebanon	Not yet applicable
34	Liberia	There is no engagement of experts for conducting, reviewing and sharing GM food safety assessment.
35	Luxembourg	GM Food safety assessment is carried out by EFSA
36	Malawi	No food safety assessment is conducted presently
37	Maldives	My country has multiple agencies involved in food control, but the Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture has no legal mandate to conduct GM Food Assessment but can be carried out voluntarily.
38	Mali	Mali has a National Food Safety Agency with the mission of safety assessment of Food for humans and animals. Currently the agency does not have the expertise for the evaluation of GM food safety assessment
39	Mauritius	Not applicable yet
40	Myanmar	No mechanism in place as regulatory framework is in the developing process
41	Nepal	Yet to be conducted GM food safety assessment.
42	Netherlands	See remark question 3, the European GM food safety assessment is reviewed by all 28 member states that may send in additional comments on the basis of the GMO dossiers.
43	Papua New Guinea	We have not fully done a GM food safety assessment as yet
44	Poland	Poland is a member state of the European Union and the regulation of GM food takes place at European Union level. Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and include a detailed study of potential for toxic, nutritional and allergenic effects. During the evaluation of applications EFSA consults the Competent Authorities of the member states. Authorizations are issued by the European Commission on a European Union - wide basis. - please see the questionnaire completed by the EU
45	Portugal	EFSA is responsible for the scientific risk assessment covering risk to both the environment and human and animal health. The risk assessment is performed in close collaboration with member states' scientific bodies. Portugal is represented in EFSA's Scientific Network on Risk Assessment of Genetically Modified Organisms. The objective of this network is to build mutual understanding of the principles underlying the risk assessment of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and to provide increased transparency in the current process between member states and EFSA.
46	Qatar	N/A
47	Romania	-
48	Rwanda	GM food safety assessment not done
49	Serbia	Only for those who choose the 1st or 2nd option in the Q3
50	Singapore	We have external experts in genetic modification advisory committee, which serves as our scientific advisory body for the safety assessment of GM food.
51	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
52	Sri Lanka	GM food safety assessment is not conducted
53	St. Kitts and Nevis	We have the department of environment responsible for legislation that governs the use of GMO. The lab for the bureau has the equipment that does the testing for GMO containing foods. We are now about to roll out a program to test seeds that are imported into the country
54	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	There are currently no GM food assessment conducted

55	Syrian Arab Republic	The GM food is not conducted, but it's using is regulated by national law
56	Timor-Leste	I could not answer this question because in the Q3, I Choose third option
57	Togo	Gm food safety assessment is not yet conducted in my country
58	Tunisia	We answered only for 5 th option in the Q3

2.5 Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment

Question: What knowledge gaps exist in your country that would need to be addressed to successfully conduct GM food safety assessment (multiple answers possible)?

- A. Interpretation of data submitted in application dossiers
- B. Knowledge of food safety assessment principles
- C. Knowledge of the food safety assessment process
- D. Knowledge of Codex guidelines on GM food safety assessment
- E. No knowledge gap exists.
- F. Others (please specify)

Table 10. Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment

Answer	Number
A. Interpretation of data submitted in application dossiers	54
B. Knowledge of food safety assessment principles	48
C. Knowledge of the food safety assessment process	62
D. Knowledge of Codex guidelines on GM food safety assessment	46
E. No knowledge gap exists.	29
F. Others	19

Table 11. Areas of the existing knowledge gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Australia	Risk assessment staff at FSANZ are provided with the opportunity to undergo professional development to ensure they maintain a high level of knowledge.
2	Burundi	A law or regulation signed for doing that. A National Biosafety Framework in Burundi has been prepared in 2006 but until now his implementation remains non effective
3	Cameroon	Identification of GM food Illegal entrance of GM food
4	Chile	The development of assessment was stopped in 2010 for bad perception by population done by surveys projects.
5	Côte d'Ivoire	The main gaps is the lack of a properly equipped structure to address to successfully conduct GM food safety assessment
6	Croatia	Lack of experimental data of safe use
7	Eswatini	The Codex standards could be emphasized on the risk assessment process
8	Indonesia	for single gene insert we do not have any gap, but we have a gap on stack genes
9	Latvia	As mentioned before we have GMO expert committee and each expert has knowledge in different field.
10	Lebanon	GM food safety assessment is not yet considered as a priority within the absence of a regulatory framework. Nevertheless, some initiatives are conducted since few years in that regard by the American University of Science and Technology in Beirut (AUST) in cooperation with the competent authorities.

11	Mauritius	It could be that competent persons are available in Mauritius in the required areas for risk assessment and they work in the private sector. Thus the necessity to have a survey on available resources and means to enhance private-public partnership.
12	Nepal	We are beginners on GM food safety assessment.
13	Nigeria	Inadequate equipped laboratories.
14	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) - please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union
15	Serbia	Serbia has experts that have knowledge in safety assessment principles, Codex standards, safety assessment process and interpretation of data regarding assessments of GM food. However, due to total ban on GM food in Serbia in last ten years it is difficult to identify possible gaps that are most efficiently revealed in practice.
16	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
17	Thailand	Knowledge of safety assessment in the situation of low level presence and that of stack genes.
18	Tunisia	Knowledge of the good practices of risk assessment
19	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Has knowledge gaps in interpretation of data submitted in application dossiers the due to no direct involvement in dossier assessment, which is instead handled by EFSA.

2.6 Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment

Question: What areas do you think your country has some capacity gaps that would need to be addressed to properly conduct GM food safety assessment (multiple answers possible)?

- A. Allergenicity and toxicity
- B. Molecular biology
- C. Compositional analysis
- D. Bioinformatics
- E. No capacity gap exists.
- F. Others (please specify)

Table 12. Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment

Answer	Number
A. Allergenicity and toxicity testing	72
B. Experiments in molecular biology	51
C. Compositional analysis of GM foods	64
D. Application of bioinformatics tools and techniques	60
E. No capacity gap exists	29
F. Others	11

Table 13. Areas of the existing capacity gaps in conducting GM food safety assessment (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Antigua and Barbuda	There are several persons employed within competent authorities who have had at least basic training in the above-mentioned areas. The major challenge would, however, be the availability of equipment and reagents to conduct the assessments where laboratory analyses are required.

2	Botswana	In the competent authority there are very few people with expertise in molecular biology
3	Chile	Not interested in addressed to conduct GM food safety assessment.
4	Croatia	Comparative analysis (stacked events), nutritional assessment
5	Fiji	Our GM food framework and legislations needs to be established first.
6	Israel	Lack of human resources.
7	Latvia	Experts involved in GMO risks assessment have knowledge in different fields, including those mentioned in the question.
8	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) - please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union
9	Serbia	Serbia has capacity for safety assessments of GM food in all mentioned fields. However, due to total ban on GM food in Serbia in last ten years it is difficult to identify possible gaps that are most efficiently revealed in practice. We expect to find that molecular biology and bioinformatics, as rapidly developing fields, are among areas that will need capacity enhancement after necessary changes in Serbia GMO legislation due to harmonization with European Union regulations.
10	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
11	Tunisia	The publication of the law and the implementation of the various sections of the law relating to risk assessment which will oriented towards many of the points cited above and which represent various gaps that may be encountered in the risk assessment process

2.7 Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points

Question: Which communication mechanisms do GM food safety assessors and focal points/ alternate focal points in your country use during food safety assessment? Please select one or more options (multiple answers possible).

- A. Regular physical meetings
- B. Regular online meetings
- C. Ad hoc online meetings
- D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders
- E. Web-based information
- F. Other (please explain)

Table 14. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points

Answer	Number
A. Regular physical meetings	67
B. Regular online meetings	12
C. Ad hoc online meetings	9
D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders	44
E. Web-based information	37
F. Others	40

Table 15. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	There is only a mailing exchanges with focal point of Codex alimentarius Algeria (Ministry of Trade)
2	Angola	We are still to perform the food safety assessment.

3	Antigua and Barbuda	Ad hoc physical meetings
4	Australia	At Food Standards Australia New Zealand, the focal point is a GM food safety assessor and the alternate focal point is the assessment team leader. There is no requirement for communication mechanisms in this case.
5	Bangladesh	In my country has not yet been established a competent authority to assess the safety of GM foods.
6	Cambodia	Ad hoc and regular meeting face to face
7	Cameroon	No communication mechanism
8	Chile	Maybe web-based information is a good way to recover the information for the citizens
9	Dominica	Meetings are not regular and a conducted ad hoc
10	Egypt	We are aiming to establish system for GM food safety assessment and communication mechanisms methods between GM food safety assessors and focal points/ alternate focal points in Egypt.
11	Finland	When needed, also physical and online meetings can be used.
12	France	At national level, there is a separation between food safety assessors and the national focal point which is a food safety risk manager. In this context, there is no communication between these two bodies during food safety assessment except if GM food safety assessors need some background information about the application to be assessed. Once the assessment is finished, it is forwarded to all risk managers including the national focal point. When needed, communication mechanisms used are physical meeting, online meeting and/or mailing list with relevant stakeholders. At the European Union level, member states have the opportunity to exchange with EFSA at different stages of the procedure (see, for more detail, answers of the European Commission).
13	Gambia	GM foods not allow, therefore no discussion
14	Germany	GM food safety assessors of the national competent authority (BVL) and focal points / alternate focal points are working in the same department of BVL. Consultation of other national authorities (cf. answer to question 4) is conducted by written procedure.
15	Guyana	There is a working group that is currently looking at the risk associated with GM food and the best framework to develop to tackle the issue
16	Japan	In Japan, the food safety assessor is the focal point.
17	Kenya	The food safety assessors submit independent reports which are then consolidated at NBA and presented to the Board of Management which makes the final decision
18	Lebanon	Not yet applicable
19	Malawi	There are no designated GM food safety assessors therefore there is no established communication mechanism with focal points/alternates focal points
20	Mauritius	Not yet applicable as GMO Act was repealed but after consultation with the Secretary of the National Biosafety Committee, it would start with either through regular meetings and e-mails
21	Myanmar	No mechanism in place as regulatory framework is in the developing process
22	Nepal	There is need of regulatory framework and capacity build up for GM food safety assessment.
23	Netherlands	Occasional physical meetings on dedicated topics at the European level
24	New Zealand	E-mail correspondence
25	Nigeria	Direct information from farmers through questionnaires.

26	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority - please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union (EFSA)
27	Qatar	N/A
28	Rwanda	No established mechanism of communication
29	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no communication on GM food assessments between focal points and food safety assessors right now. But since we must harmonize our legislation with European Union and therefore allow applications for GM food in future, experiences from other countries in that respect are very valuable for us. On other issues, we have physical meetings of our expert council on Biosafety which is expert body for evaluating applications and risk assessments. Focal point on GM food is currently chair of expert council on biosafety and alternate focal point is secretary of expert council on Biosafety.
30	Singapore	By emails
31	South Sudan	Physical meetings which is not regularly
32	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question nº3.
33	Sri Lanka	None of above
34	St. Kitts and Nevis	We look at material available out there in the literature but we have not done our formal assessment as yet
35	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Currently, no GM Food Safety Assessment is conducted in the country
36	Timor-Leste	So far we didn't do any food safety assessment
37	Togo	Ad hoc physical meeting but it is just provisional. Food safety assessment has not yet been done in my country
38	Tunisia	Vision conference meeting also used in food risk assessment
39	Uganda	Periodic physical meetings
40	United States of America	We are not sure what the question is asking. If this refers to meetings of the review staff- we use regular physical meetings and ad hoc online meetings

2.8 Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points

Question: Please explain briefly about the selected mechanisms above, e.g. who are involved, how often they are convened and what are discussed.

Table 16. Communications between GM food safety assessors and platform focal points

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	Few discussions about my participation in the FAO GM foods platform.
2	Antigua and Barbuda	In Antigua and Barbuda, the Department of the Environment has overall responsibility for biosafety. In this regard, at least two workshops were held as part of a regional biosafety project to address the issue of GM food safety assessment within the last 3 years. Persons from the competent authorities (bureau of standards, plant health, animal health, environmental health) as well as border control agencies, including customs, met to discuss what food safety assessments entail. Following this, several references were reviewed for two chosen GM events following the principles established by Codex. Determinations were then made as to their safety. Since the organizational structure to support these activities is pending formalization with the passage of legislation, no further meetings have since been held to specifically address the issue of food safety assessment.
3	Argentina	6 annual meetings and email exchanges disseminating applications and decision document drafts

4	Armenia	Relevant and competent authority or international organization organize meeting. Experts of SSFS, MoH, MoH, MoE and laboratories and scientific centers are involved in these meetings. They are discussed about how to invest in GM assessment system in the different area of interesting.
5	Azerbaijan	We regularly organize meeting and discussing new technologies and biosafety systems.
6	Bangladesh	As I mentioned this question is not applicable as there is no competent authority to assess the safety of GM foods in my country.
7	Belarus	By Order of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus of 5 December 2012, No412-OD (with amendments introduced by orders of 12 January 2015, №14-OD and 28 October 2015, No 370-OD), the Expert Safety Board of Genetically Engineered Organisms of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus was established in the Republic of Belarus. The Expert Safety Board is a collegial advisory body and it incorporates a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman, a Secretary and Board members from the officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus, other specially authorized bodies of State Administration in the field of safety in genetic engineering activity and specialists in this field, scientific institutions, as well as citizens of the Republic of Belarus. Focal point is member if the Expert Board. Safety assessors, who provides assessment of each separate GMO, are invited to participate in the Expert Board. Objectives of the Expert Board are as follows: organization and carrying out of the State Safety Expertise of genetically engineered organisms; recommendation of candidates for carrying out the State Safety Expertise of GMOs; consideration of the State Safety Expertise findings of GMOs; adoption of recommendations on release admissibility of GMOs into the environment for testing or use for economic purposes.
8	Bhutan	We have established biosafety technical working group from different stakeholders with different background. We meet as and when there is issues on biosafety to be discussed and apprise to national biosafety board.
9	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	At the Bolivian level, only one safety assessment has been carried out, since only one soybean event has been approved, however if an event is admitted to perform the environmental risk assessment and subsequent safety evaluation, the subcommittee meetings are regular meetings, online meetings and consultations with experts are also held, as well as the training consultation in the network
10	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GMO Council is official body that meets regularly and discuss all issues related to GMO within the country.
11	Botswana	The competent authority usually calls stakeholders including farmers twice a year to give an update on what is happening in the area of Genetically Modified Organisms globally and within the country
12	Bulgaria	The process for authorization of a new GMO is done at European level, based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorization of a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is

		responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. During the risk assessment, MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA. EFSA informs regularly the MS and the European Commission on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
13	Burkina Faso	All governmental technical departments involved in food safety and GM-food management
14	Burundi	Selected mechanisms above are accordingly with communications capacities in place. Representatives from ministries, public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and associative movements, trade union organizations whose mission or scope or competence has some relation to the use of modern biotechnology and Biosafety management are involved and often convened to discuss each GMOs issue raised in order to report to the decision maker to statute on it.
15	Cabo Verde	In Cabo Verde, there is the National Food Control System, where government officials, representatives of economic operators and consumer representatives discuss food security problems. There is also the National Codex Alimentarius Commission, which also deals with issues related to Codex Alimentarius standards, and their incorporation into national laws. These committees meet regularly twice a year and extraordinarily when there is a need. The Secretariat sends e-mails to Committee members, sharing relevant information on food safety and soliciting their opinion on the subject, when necessary are also shared on the website of the Health Regulatory Authority, which is responsible for controlling the food safety of novel foods, information relevant to the general public, on food safety, including genetically modified foods
16	Cambodia	Rarely meeting, since establishment the Committee and WG.
17	Cameroon	Cameroon has a standards agency but there is no communication mechanism on GM food
18	Canada	Assessors, including the focal point, from Health Canada (food) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA; feed, environmental release) are in close contact throughout the parallel review process under the three programs. Assessors (evaluators) have expertise in different aspects of the review (molecular biology, nutrition, toxicology, chemical safety, agronomy) and draw on one another's expertise if questions arise in the course of assessment. Health Canada and CFIA have a "no split approval" policy, so timing of decisions is a consideration in conducting and finalizing assessment outcomes.
19	Central African Republic	We meet once a quarter; the stakeholders are the government, the consumers, the industrialists, the researchers. Codex standards are

		discussed and adapted to the results of studies conducted in the country. We never talk about GMOs in our meeting.
20	Chile	www.achipia.cl should be the government organization involved
21	Congo	The best mechanisms are by mails for participate all stakeholders
22	Croatia	Representatives of all competent authorities of GMO s in Croatia, members of all scientific bodies of GMOs and all reference Laboratories of GMOs - all of them have been included in field of assessing of GMOs in accordance to their competence. In accordance to the request of applicant who would like to authorize GM food on European Union market central competent authority in the Republic of Croatia should have organized those meetings. Croatia is a member of European Union and EFSA is responsible for risk assessment in accordance to the regulation (ec)1829/2003
23	Cyprus	Experts from different public sectors and different specializations. The meetings are not very often.
24	Czechia	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
25	Denmark	Denmark is a member of the European Union. The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants

		(requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DVFA) asks the National Food Institute at the Danish Technical University to evaluate the safety of the GMO and to indicate to the DVFA whether or not there are points in the evaluation made by EFSA, which in their view need further consideration. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
26	Dominica	Bureau of standards, Environmental Health Ministry of Agriculture meet when there is a food safety issue or recalls of food that pose a risk to consumers
27	Ecuador	We don't have meetings, we only have a link in a page of on university that developing research related to GM foods
28	Eritrea	The Regulatory Services Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Hamelmalo Agricultural College. Once 2-3 months discussions on GM foods.
29	Eswatini	The National Biosafety Advisory Committee reviews applications and inputs from the public. The focal point is the secretary of the committee
30	European Union	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
31	Fiji	Physical meeting is usually conducted once or twice a year where relevant government ministries and stakeholders come together to discuss on developing GMO platform and how best we can progress with contributions from competent authorities on their different roles in monitoring and safety assessment of GMO foods. Relevant government ministries include: the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Customs & Inland Revenue,

		Environment Department, Consumer Council of Fiji, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, etc.
32	Finland	As a part of the European Union, Finland keeps the rules of the European Union and closely cooperates with the European Commission. Nationally, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Finnish Food Authority work also closely together.
33	France	See Q7.
34	Gabon	Representatives of the ministries in charge of agriculture, fisheries, research, environment, trade, customs, health are mainly invited to the meeting by one of the focal points for sharing around the issue of GM foods and food security
35	Georgia	N/A
36	Germany	See answer to question 7. Consultation of other national authorities is conducted individually for every GM food application.
37	Ghana	The meeting involves the Technical Advisory Committee members (for risks assessment); Board members for decision making on applications
38	Greece	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
39	Grenada	Regular meetings is held ones a month with respective stockholder from difference organization
40	Guyana	No detail of this mechanism is currently available
41	Honduras	Physical meetings are held with the biosafety committee, formed by scientists and public officials of Honduras. Online meetings are carried out through the platform The Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) established by the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
42	Indonesia	We have a physical meeting among the member of food safety technical team (the technical team is a team consisted expert in different experts that come from different institutions in several ministries and universities. The periodic meeting is depend on the application (dossier hand by the applicant), first the dossier is evaluated by a small team (consist 4-5

		members with different field), they make a summary of the result of risk assessment, than the summary is evaluated (another physical meeting) again by a whole member of GM food safety technical team (about 10 members), and the revision of the summary is evaluated again in Biosafety Commission meeting (another different group, consisted expert from university, ministry, NGOs), this biosafety commission will give a recommendation to the head of FDA (in Indonesia is BPOM) for giving certificate for food safety. All the meeting is discussed about information needed such as genetic information, toxicity, and allergenicity (as in codex).
43	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Delegates from competent authorities as well as GMO scientists, producers, importers and NGO societies are involved. They meet at least once in 2 months and discuss on risk assessment dossiers and safety assessment procedures.
44	Iraq	The food assessment process is on the first stages on my country and regulatory framework is under processing from more than one authority such as COSQC, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Experts and others through meeting and discussing this issue.
45	Ireland	Stakeholders are Government Departments primarily
46	Israel	Once the GM food committee will start its work it will have to assess dossiers. The participants are from MOH (different departments), Ministry of Agriculture and of the academia. Main communication is physical meetings and emails. The RA draft will be published for public consultation without confidential details.
47	Italy	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European authority that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
48	Jamaica	The local GM Foods platform has not met with any stakeholders to discuss matters. There exists a challenge of information accessibility to local research data.
49	Japan	In Japan, the food safety assessor is the focal point.

50	Kenya	The authority sends the dossier to the relevant food safety regulatory agencies as well as the enlisted food safety experts
51	Kiribati	A national CODEX committee consist of a rep from Ministry of Health, Agriculture, Fisheries, AG's office, Ministry of Commerce, etc. were informed through a quarterly meeting about works done from relevant line ministries on food safety works such as GM food assessment to name a few.
52	Latvia	GMO expert committee has regular physical meetings 4 times per year according national regulations, If needed more meetings can be conducted. Usually communication is via e-mails. The expert committee is supervised by Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR" - a research Centre of national importance which develops innovative research methods and creates new practically applicable knowledge in the following areas of science: public and environmental health, food, fishery and veterinary medicine.
53	Lebanon	Information is often shared in an informal way through personal contacts between scientists. Results are presented during certain relevant workshops and master students thesis defense.
54	Liberia	The biosafety focal point, GMO focal point and the Director of the National Standards Laboratory are involved in regular email exchanges and meetings. The meeting is done on a quarterly basis. Key issues that are discussed including the MOU that exist between the National Standards Laboratory and Environmental Protection Agency.
55	Lithuania	Involved specialists from Ministry of Health, Agriculture, Environmental, Food and veterinary service, National food and veterinary risk assessment institute, research institutes and universities.
56	Luxembourg	Luxembourg has a website where information regarding food-safety are published. The site is updated regularly. https://securite-alimentaire.public.lu/fr.html
57	Madagascar	Laboratory managers and members of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee -every two months -The risk assessment method for genetically modified foods
58	Malawi	No food safety assessment is conducted presently
59	Malaysia	The focal point is part of the secretariat that assists the GM food safety assessors, therefore has full privy to the discussions of the assessments.
60	Maldives	We don't have regular meetings but if we would like to discuss a case then we could use the national Codex Committee to discuss, which is a platform which involves all stake holders related to food safety.
61	Mali	Physical meetings are held with all parties involved (technical departments, universities, consumer associations, laboratories at the time of need. when resources are insufficient, working papers are sent online to interested parties for comments
62	Mauritius	As soon as the new law will be promulgated, there will be an implementation phase following which there will be suggestions for improvement.
63	Mongolia	Once a 3 week we are contacted and discussing about GMO in Mongolia.
64	Montenegro	University staff and molecular biology expert from country and region
65	Myanmar	Not relevant
66	Namibia	Meetings involve the Biosafety Secretariat and the Biosafety Council who make recommendation to the minister to make decisions regarding the application during evaluation of application (scheduled calendar). Other Agencies and relevant Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, M. of trade, M. of

		Environment and M. of health also play a role in decision making on need basis regarding a particular application.
67	Nepal	There is often discussion among stakeholders on policy level issues rather than GM food safety assessment.
68	Netherlands	Yearly meeting of the GMO Scientific Network for risk assessors, web-based information is provided by EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and occasionally additional meetings on specific scientific topics related to GMO risk assessment are organized.
69	Nigeria	Regular stakeholders meetings conducted once every two months. Farmers, and seasonal during planting periods.
70	Papua New Guinea	We use National Codex Committee and relevant stakeholders as a vehicle to drive the GM Foods Platform issues in our country.
71	Paraguay	The biosafety commission is composed of experts from various disciplines and has regular meetings at least once a month
72	Peru	<p>Se tratan los siguientes temas: Propuesta de una ley sobre la bioseguridad de la Biotecnología, es necesario destacar que la Comisión Multisectorial de Asesoramiento(CMA) ha realizado el seguimiento de la implementación de la Ley de Moratoria en tres sesiones ordinarias, evaluando y analizando el estado de avance de seis temas priorizados:1)Instrumentos y control de OVM, 2) Instrumentos y acciones de vigilancia de OVM.3) Informes de avance en la elaboración de líneas de base. 4) Identificación de centros de origen y diversificación. 5) Fortalecimiento de capacidades para la implementación de la Ley de Moratoria, e implementación de programas y proyectos especiales de la Ley de Moratoria.6) Informes de los grupos de trabajo de la CMA</p> <p>English translation: The following topics are discussed: a law proposal on biosafety and biotechnology, it is necessary to highlight that the Comisión Multisectorial de Asesoramiento (CMA) followed up on the Moratorium law implementation in three extraordinary sessions, evaluating and analyzing the advancement of six priority themes: 1) instruments and control of LMOs, 2) instruments and monitoring actions; 3) progress report on the elaboration of a baseline; 4) identification of origin and diversification centers; 5) strengthening of capacities for the implementation of the Moratorium and implementation of programs and special projects of the Moratorium; 6) Report of the working groups of the CMA.</p>
73	Philippines	During the final review of the assessments, the Department of Agriculture Biosafety Committee may invite the food safety assessors to discuss the assessment made.
74	Qatar	N/A
75	Romania	The work in the field of food safety is complimented by the work of a Scientific Council that deals with RA of food. This Council meets regularly (at least quarterly) and debate and issue opinions in the field of food safety. The Council is composed by 12 famous scientists activating in various national universities, having different backgrounds in sanitary veterinary and food safety field. The scientific information is also exchanged with them via mailing list whenever is available.
76	Samoa	First a meeting with the Samoa National Codex Committee will be conducted to discuss this GM assessment, then a one to one meeting with

		relevant ministries e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to get their view on GM or Ministry of Health or our scientific organization. A discussion will be based on developing a regulatory framework on GM and how it will impact Samoa economy.
77	Sao Tome and Principe	Centro de investigação e direção geral de ambiente. Só reúnem quando há necessidades English translation: Research center and the Directorate General for Environment only meet in case of need.
78	Senegal	The exchanges focus on food safety and national positions on the development of codex alimentarius standards (different sessions).
79	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no selected mechanisms for communication on GM food assessments between Focal points and food safety assessors right now right now.
80	Singapore	Who are involved: Communication by emails is between Secretariat of Genetic Modification Advisory Committee (GMAC) and country authority. How often: as and when there is an industry application What are discussed: outcome of the GMAC's safety assessment of new industry application
81	Slovakia	As part of the European Union, we keep the rules of the European Union and closely cooperate with the European Commission. The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
82	South Sudan	As the country try is on the process of developing the GM. Representatives are selected from the institution that is related to issues concerning food safety e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, Health, Bureau of standards and so on. The main discussion is now on how to identify the priority of risks and type of foods concerning human health.
83	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question nº3.
84	Sri Lanka	N/A

85	St. Kitts and Nevis	We have members of the focal point and alternate focal point participate in a training sessions on GMO funded by USDA, university of Michigan and Monsanto. This creates awareness and bridge the knowledge gaps about GMO and currently technology deployed that are associated with its use.
86	Sudan	The national inspection authorities are involved such as Sudan Standards and Meteorology Organization, National Biosafety Council and Ministry of health with technical institutions to exchange information and views and thereafter in most cases exchange emails. Information on Biosafety clearing house is used to help in some cases
87	Syrian Arab Republic	We are conducting by emails, and mails ASAP, they are (NFP and responsible person on codex apartment.
88	Tanzania	Once the application is received by the National Biosafety Focal Point (NBFP), the committee of experts (National Biosafety Committee) is convened. This committee works as an advisory body to advice the NBFP, the Minister, Competent Authority or Sector Ministries on all matters related to biotechnology and biosafety. It is in this meeting, where the received dossier is jointly evaluated and opinions from various institutions and sector ministries are received.
89	Thailand	A sub-committee for GM safety assessment, which comprises experts on each technical issue, competent authorities and a representative from ACFS (focal point), was established. Physical meetings are regularly arranged based on the number of proposals requested for assessment that are about 4-5 times per year. In national standard setting process, ACFS established the guidelines relevant to GM food safety assessment base on Codex Guidelines. The process included physical meeting of technical committee and public hearing.
90	Togo	Who are involved: The focal point for OGM platform, the representative of the future legal authority for biosafety, Researcher on the topic, assessors
91	Tunisia	Physical meetings are attended at least four times per year and as much as necessary. If there are emergencies, on line meetings will be programmed or in the case that all the members of the team cannot be present in the same place and day. The exchange of information, documents can be done by mail and dropbox or google drive according to the for large documents. The report meetings and the programming of the next meetings will be managed by emails
92	Turkey	Biosafety applications in Turkey are carried out within the framework of the Biosafety Law (No.5977) which entered into force in 26 September 2010 and its relevant regulations. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry makes a "Decision" about applications on GMO and products via taking Scientific Committees' risk assessment and socio-economic assessment into account. List of Experts has been made up by the evaluation of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry from the applicants who applied via using the Biosafety Clearing-House mechanism of Turkey. Applicants were faculty members and experts of Universities and TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). In this context, scientific committees hold regular physical meetings in the evaluation of applications related to GMOs. In addition to regular scientific committee meeting, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry holds meetings with relevant Ministries in the decision-making process.

93	Uganda	The members of the National Biosafety Committee meet quarterly. Majority of the discussions have previously been on developing the necessary legislation.
94	United Arab Emirates	Establishing working groups and committees and invite: government\ private\ industry\ academic\ suppliers
95	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. EFSA informs regularly the MS (and the European Commission) on the status of applications by emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website (under a register of questions). EFSA involves independent external experts (forming the GMO Panel) for carrying out the risk assessment, and organize physical meetings of the GMO Panel to which the European Commission attends as an observer. After performing the risk assessment, EFSA submits its scientific opinion to the European Commission and to European Union MS. Finally, EFSA usually convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments.
96	United States of America	Review teams meet as needed and this could be several times during the review process (depending on the complexity of the submission). These meetings discuss the overall submission and whether all relevant questions were address and then we may also meet, if needed, to talk about specific questions
97	Uruguay	Evaluators have regular meetings every 15 days, we have a web page for them with password to up load the information they need and we organize videoconference with experts when we have specific questions.
98	Yemen	An irregular meeting was held. Electronic messaging
99	Zambia	The Authority holds regular meetings both with experts and the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee. The meetings are held consecutively and at least once per quarter.
100	Zimbabwe	8 GM Food safety assessors are involved. NBA website is the link to documents and information prepared by the competent authority responsible for the safety assessment NBA website - http://www.nba.ac.zw . The discussions involve GMO surveillance programmers which are regularly carried out at ports of entry, grain reservoirs, fields, markets and borderline towns. These entail collecting samples of food, feed and seed and testing them for the presence of GMOs.

2.9 Communications between platform focal points and decision makers

Question: Which communication mechanisms do focal points/alternate focal points and decision makers use during food safety assessment in your country? Please select one or more options (multiple answers possible).

- A. Regular physical meetings
- B. Regular online meetings
- C. Ad hoc online meetings
- D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders
- E. Web-based information
- F. Other (please explain)

Table 17. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers

Answer	Number
A. Regular physical meetings	75
B. Regular online meetings	14
C. Ad hoc online meetings	9
D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders	42
E. Web-based information	28
F. Others	43

Table 18. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	Because there is no decision makers, no mechanism of communication is set up
2	Angola	We should like use the regular physical meeting and mailing list with relevant stakeholders
3	Antigua and Barbuda	Ad hoc physical meeting
4	Argentina	Same as above
5	Bangladesh	Answer is same like the question 8.
6	Cabo Verde	In Cabo Verde there is the National Food Control System is where government officials, representatives of economic operators and consumer representatives discuss food security problems. There is also the National Codex Alimentarius Commission, which also deals with issues related to Codex Alimentarius standards, and their incorporation into national laws. These committees meet regularly twice a year and extraordinarily when there is a need. The Secretariat sends e-mails to Committee members, sharing relevant information on food safety and soliciting their opinion on the subject, when necessary. Are also shared on the website of the Health Regulatory Authority, which is responsible for controlling the food safety of novel foods, information relevant to the general public, on food safety, including genetically modified foods
7	Cambodia	Ad hoc meeting only traders apply import license for LMO into the country and do risk assessment base on result of outsource experts.
8	Chile	Mails by specific questions.
9	Dominica	Meetings are not regular
10	Ecuador	We have still a communication mechanism
11	Egypt	We are aiming to establish system for GM food safety assessment and communication mechanisms methods between decision makers and focal points/ alternate focal points in Egypt.

12	Eritrea	The Regulatory Services Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Hamelmalo Agricultural College.
13	Finland	Because EFSA does the food safety assessment, no communication occurs during food safety assessment. The communication occurs as the food safety assessment is finalized. The focal point and the decision makers' work in the same ministry and Finland is a small country, so no communication problems exists.
14	France	As explained in Q7, the national focal point is a food safety risk manager. At national level, there are different communication mechanisms as all decision are validated within all the ministries involved on recombinant-DNA plants. But this communication does not occur during food safety assessment (as there a separation between the assessors and the decision makers) but once the food safety assessment is finalized.
15	Germany	The process for authorizing a new GMO is based on the Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on GM food and feed. An application for authorizing a new GMO for food and feed uses must be submitted to the national competent authority of one of the European Union member states (MS). The national authority then sends the application to the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) for a risk assessment. EFSA is a European agency that operates independently of the European institutions and European Union member states, and which is responsible for risk assessment of GMO applications. EFSA assesses the risks the GMO presents for the environment, human health and animal safety. MS have the possibility to comment on the application, and those comments are taken into account by EFSA during its risk assessment. In Germany, the Federal Office of Consumer Protection (BVL) is the competent authority for commenting on GMO applications (cf. answer to question 4). After a favorable EFSA opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health and in the Appeal Committee, Germany is represented by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). BVL (national competent authority and focal point/alternate focal point) communicates with BMEL regularly in writing and via telephone calls.
16	Guyana	No regular meeting is hosted
17	Italy	Member states can send their comments and observations to EFSA
18	Jamaica	No GM food safety assessment mechanisms have been developed.
19	Latvia	We (Ministry of Agriculture) as a focal point do not do communication with GMO expert committee. If specific GMO risk assessment or opinion in this field needed we ask BIOR to provide necessary information.
20	Lebanon	Informal discussions
21	Liberia	There has been no GMO food safety assessment
22	Malawi	There is no established communication mechanism between focal points/alternate focal points and decision makers principally because food safety assessment is not yet being conducted
23	Maldives	Meet physically based on different cases.
24	Mauritius	Not yet applicable. But will still be as mentioned in 8 above.

25	Myanmar	No mechanism in place as regulatory framework is in the developing process
26	Nepal	There is need to be establishment of mechanism for GM food safety assessment. There used to be physical meeting among stakeholders regarding food safety issues.
27	New Zealand	E-mail correspondence
28	Papua New Guinea	During the regular physical meetings we discuss about the GM Food that are imported into our country from the developed countries. The National Codex Committee and relevant stakeholders including research institutes and academia are on the mailing list that receive documents and information we sent on their email addresses.
29	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)- please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union
30	Qatar	N/A
31	Rwanda	No established mechanism of communication
32	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no communication on GM food assessment between focal points and decision makers right now. But since we must harmonize our legislation with European Union and therefore allow applications for GM food in future, experiences from other countries in that respect are very valuable for us.
33	Singapore	Email
34	South Sudan	Physical meetings but not regular
35	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question nº3.
36	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	We are currently not conducting any GM food Assessments in St. Vincent and the Grenadines
37	Syrian Arab Republic	The communication was by invitation from decision makers to discuss the raised matters related GM food
38	Thailand	Biotech is a competent agency that is responsible for food safety assessment as a secretariat of sub-committee on GM food safety assessment. The sub-committee works through physical meetings and online discussion. The assessment results will be submitted to FDA for decision making. Since the GM safety assessment is currently voluntary. The official result will be informed to the company that requested for safety assessment.
39	Togo	Ad hoc online meeting. But it is provisional
40	Tunisia	In fact we are using the mailing and regular physical meetings for food assessment in general
41	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	National experts that sit on expert panel, as well EFSA committee meeting. EFSA REGAULAR SCOPAFF and commission meetings
42	United States of America	I'm not sure what the question is asking. If this refers to meetings of the review staff- we use regular physical meetings and ad hoc online meetings
43	Zambia	Regular physical meetings are held with Board members and the Alternate /focal points submit the decisions on the websites.

2.10 Communications between platform focal points and decision makers

Question: Please explain briefly about the selected mechanisms above, e.g. who are involved, how often they are convened and what are discussed.

Table 19. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers

#	Country	Response
1	Angola	We expect to involve institutions, Universities, decision makers and the potential users.
2	Antigua and Barbuda	The issue is discussed, as necessary, in face to face meetings that address food safety in general.
3	Argentina	Same as above
4	Armenia	Relevant and competent authority is organizing meeting with the decision makers of SSFS, MoH, MoH, MoE and international experts for finding the short way to invest in GM assessment system in the different area of interesting.
5	Australia	Approvals of GM food applications are made by the FSANZ Board, There are 4-6 physical meetings held each year, with information shared with the Board members via a secure extranet site.
6	Bangladesh	Not applicable at this moment as there is no competent authority in my country to assess the safety of GM foods.
7	Belarus	Explanations are given in the Question 8
8	Bhutan	Biosafety technical working group
9	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	The interaction between the focal point and the Biosecurity Committee is permanent, at the moment the introduction of 2 new events has been requested, for which meetings of the committee have been called in which they have participated, guiding on the elaboration of an abbreviated procedure
10	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that is in the process of joining the European Union, accordingly we have adopted the entire European Union legislation. The GMO Council is the official body responsible for considering each application for the placing on the market of GMO products and, considers and approves only those modifications that have been evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and are on the list of approved modification for use in the European Union. So far, GMO Council has not been considering any GM modification that has not been approved for use in the European Union.
11	Botswana	As the Agriculture Research Department is the officially appointed competent authority to deal with GMO issues they facilitate meetings and key stakeholders Ministry of Health and local farmers are involved and these meetings are held twice a year
12	Bulgaria	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.

13	Burkina Faso	All governmental technical departments involved in food safety. They are convened as much as necessary and according to Financial availability for meeting and work sessions
14	Burundi	Selected mechanisms above are accordingly with communications capacities in place. Representatives from ministries, public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and associative movements, trade union organizations whose mission or scope or competence has some relation to the use of modern biotechnology and Biosafety management are involved and often convened to discuss each GMOs issue raised in order to report to the decision maker to statute on it.
15	Cabo Verde	In Cabo Verde, there is the National Food Control System, where government officials, representatives of economic operators and consumer representatives discuss food security problems. There is also the National Codex Alimentarius Commission, which also deals with issues related to Codex Alimentarius standards, and their incorporation into national laws. These committees meet regularly twice a year and extraordinarily when there is a need.
16	Cambodia	Ministry of Environment
17	Cameroon	The standards agency which is under the Ministry of Industry organize regular physical meeting on norms concerning all domains. Different representatives are invited depending on the domain involved.
18	Canada	Food Rulings Committee at Health Canada consists of the Director General for the Food Directorate and Directors of science and horizontal bureaux. CFIA representatives call in to this meeting. Assessment outcomes are presented and are open for questions. The Committee meets every two weeks.
19	Central African Republic	We meet once a quarter; the stakeholders are the government, the consumers, the industrialists, the researchers. Codex standards are discussed and adapted to the results of studies conducted in the country. We never talk about GMOs in our meeting.
20	Chile	-
21	Congo	All stakeholders participate in discussions by mails. We need a good internet connation for involve local platform
22	Croatia	Croatia is a member of European Union. All European Union legislation have been transposed in Croatian legislation. In accordance to that there are 5 competent authorities, 3 scientific bodies (Council of GMOs, Committee of contained use, committee of deliberate release, 2 reference Laboratories and 2 legal person for risk assessment.
23	Cyprus	Experts from different public sectors and different specializations. The meetings are not very often.
24	Czechia	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.

25	Denmark	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The Danish opinion is based on the EFSA risk assessment and the assessment made by the Danish experts. In addition to food safety aspects also the safety of the environment is important. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
26	Dominica	Bureau of standards , Environmental health, Ministry of Agriculture
27	Ecuador	We don't have still a communication mechanism, but in the future we have liking involve all of stakeholder of the food chain
28	Eritrea	The Regulatory Services Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Hamelmalo Agricultural College. Once 2-3 months discussed on GM foods.
29	Eswatini	Communication is mostly by emails, and decisions are made in physical meetings
30	European Union	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states (MS) a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
31	Fiji	Physical meeting is usually conducted once or twice a year where relevant government ministries and stakeholders come together to discuss on developing GMO framework and how best this can be inserted into our food safety legislation, and how we can progress with contributions from competent authorities on their different roles in monitoring and safety assessment of GMO foods. Relevant Government Ministries include: the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Customs & Inland Revenue, Environment Department, Consumer Council of Fiji, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, etc.
32	Finland	Every EFSA's opinion and Commission's proposal of a draft decision is discussed nationally before the meeting of the Commission Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health.
33	France	See Q9 and answers from the European Commission.
34	Gabon	representatives of the ministries in charge of agriculture, fisheries, research, environment, waters and forests, trade, customs, health are mainly invited to the meeting by one of the focal points for sharing around the issue of GM foods and food security
35	Georgia	generally we use mailing list, but in this case we don't use anything because it is not conducted
36	Germany	See answer to question 9.

37	Ghana	The meeting involves the Technical Advisory Committee members (for risks assessment); Board members for decision making on applications. The frequency of the meeting depends on nature of the application
38	Greece	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
39	Grenada	Regular meetings once a Month are held with the Biosafety Authority draw from difference organization including Ministry of Agriculture, Health, Finance , Produce Chemist Laboratory , Grenada Bureau of Standard, Custom Port Authority, Farmers and Consumers Organization
40	Guyana	None
41	Honduras	Scientists and public officials of Honduras, Normally meetings are held once a year or every time a genetically modified organism is released in the country
42	Indonesia	Similar answer as in item 8, who involved on ad hoc online meeting is similar to who involved in physical meeting
43	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Delegates from competent authorities as well as GMO scientists are involved. They meet at least twice in a year and discuss on approved dossiers, events which have been or to be imported and is being used in food industry, risk assessment procedures and risk management actions.
44	Iraq	The food assessment process is on the first stages on my country and regulatory framework is under processing from more than one authority such as COSQC, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Experts and others through meeting and discussing this issue.
45	Ireland	Government Departments are primary stakeholders
46	Italy	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
47	Jamaica	No GM food safety assessment mechanisms have been developed.
48	Japan	Information regarding our expert committee's meetings is open on our official website.
49	Kenya	The decision making organ in Kenya is compost of representatives from regulatory agencies as well as independent Board members
50	Kiribati	Same as for question 8
51	Latvia	-
52	Liberia	N/A

53	Libya	Decision makers they have regular physical meeting once a month to take decisions
54	Lithuania	Delegates from the health, agriculture, environment, food and veterinary services, research institutes and Universities.
55	Luxembourg	Meetings are arranged when necessary
56	Madagascar	Food importers, laboratory managers and members of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee - every three months -The need for risk assessment of imported food products
57	Malawi	No food safety assessment is conducted presently
58	Malaysia	The focal point attends the meetings of the decision makers, therefore has full privy to the discussions of the assessments that leads to decisions.
59	Maldives	Representatives from stakeholder agencies in food control, Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture, Maldives Food and Drug Authority, Health Protection Agency, Maldives customs Services, Industry representatives from NGO's
60	Mali	Physical meetings are held with all parties' involved (technical departments, universities, consumer associations, laboratories at the time of need. when resources are insufficient, working papers are sent online to interested parties for comments
61	Mauritius	This will still be in line with what is mentioned in 8 above.
62	Montenegro	Generally, the decisions are made based on the data collected and assessments conducted. We have fluent communication with all relevant parties
63	Myanmar	Not relevant
64	Namibia	Meetings involve the Biosafety Secretariat and the Biosafety Council who make recommendation to the minister to make decisions regarding the application during evaluation of application (scheduled calendar). Other Agencies and relevant Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, M. of trade, M. of Environment and M. of health also play a role in decision making on need basis regarding a particular application (human and animal health and environmental safety, trade, and socioeconomic impacts).
65	Nepal	The selected mechanisms are guided by regulatory framework.
66	Netherlands	Yearly meeting organized by the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, web-based information is provided
67	Nigeria	Regular stakeholders meetings conducted once every two months.
68	Papua New Guinea	As a focal point we call a meeting for technical officers from various relevant agencies to attend and discuss issues regarding labelling of GM Foods and feed ingredients.
69	Paraguay	The members of the biosafety commission, in some cases invited experts and the applicant
70	Peru	Se cuenta con una comisión multisectorial de asesoramiento. CMA. conformada por. 1. Ministerio del Ambiente (Presidencia) 2. Consejo Nacional de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Tecnológica (Secretaría Técnica) 3. Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros 4. Ministerio de Agricultura y Riego 5. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 6. Ministerio de Comercio Exterior y Turismo 7. Ministerio de la Producción 8. Organismo de Evaluación y Fiscalización Ambiental 9. Instituto Nacional de Calidad (anteriormente, representante de INDECOPI) 10. Gobiernos Regionales 11. Universidades 12. Un representante de los gremios de agricultores. 13. Un representante del sector empresarial 14. Gobiernos locales 15. Dos representantes de las organizaciones no gubernamentales que trabajan en

		<p>temas de gestión de la biotecnología moderna, bioseguridad y bioética. se discute principalmente 06 temas priorizados 1) Instrumentos y control de OVM, 2) Instrumentos y acciones de vigilancia de OVM. 3) Informes de avance en la elaboración de líneas de base. 4) Identificación de centros de origen y diversificación. 5) Fortalecimiento de capacidades para la implementación de la Ley de Moratoria, e implementación de programas y proyectos especiales de la Ley de Moratoria. 6) Informes de los grupos de trabajo de la CMA. Las actas de sesiones (de las reuniones la síntesis, los acuerdos se encuentran en el siguiente enlace: http://bioseguridad.minam.gob.pe/normatividad/implementacion/cma/ se convoca a reunión conforme a la frecuencia establecida en el plan anual.</p> <p>English translation: There is an assessment multisectorial commission (CMA) which includes: 1) Ministry of Environment (presidency); 2) National Council for Science, Technology and Technological Innovation (Technical Secretary); 3) Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers; 4) Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation; 5) Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 6) Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism; 7) Ministry of Production; 8) Agency for Environmental Assessment and Enforcement; 9) National Institute of Quality (former INDECOPI) 10) Regional Governments; 11) Universities; 12) A farmers trade union representative; 13) A representative from the business sector; 14) Local governments; 15) Two representatives from NGOs that work on themes related to modern biotechnologies, biosafety and bioethics. The following topics are discussed: a law proposal on biosafety and biotechnology, it is necessary to highlight that CMA followed up on the Moratorium law implementation in three extraordinary sessions, evaluating and analyzing the advancement of six priority themes: 1) instruments and control of LMOs, 2) instruments and monitoring actions; 3) progress report on the elaboration of a baseline; 4) identification of origin and diversification centers; 5) strengthening of capacities for the implementation of the Moratorium and implementation of programs and special projects of the Moratorium; 6) Report of the working groups of the CMA. The meeting minutes, the summary of these sessions and the agreements can be found at the following link: http://bioseguridad.minam.gob.pe/normatividad/implementacion/cma/. Frequency of the meeting is established with the annual plan.</p>
71	Philippines	During the final review of the assessments, the Department of Agriculture Biosafety Committee may invite the food safety assessors to discuss the assessment made. They convened a meeting once a month.
72	Qatar	N/A
73	Romania	See point 8.
74	Samoa	Samoa National Codex Committee will be involved as this committee comprises of government ministries and private sectors.
75	Sao Tome and Principe	Centro de Investigação e Direcção Geral do Ambiente English translation: Directorate General for Environment (presidency)
76	Senegal	The exchanges focus on food safety and national positions on the development of codex alimentarius standards (different sessions).

77	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no selected mechanisms for communication between focal points and decision makers on issues of GM food assessment right now.
78	Singapore	Who are involved: focal point/alternate focal point and approving authority? How often: as and when there is an industry application. What are discussed: outcome of the safety assessment of new industry application
79	Slovakia	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
80	South Sudan	From concern institution, but still, they are a lot of discussion on the duties and responsibilities.
81	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
82	Sri Lanka	Food technologists Administrators and other stakeholders Weekly
83	St. Kitts and Nevis	We are now setting up a formalize system to test plant material imported into the country. This is between department of environment and bureau of standards
84	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	The persons who would be involved in the assessments are persons drawn from Ministry of Agriculture Research and Development Division and The Bureau of Standards
85	Sudan	Sudan National Biosafety Council has its Biosafety technical committee which meet and make recommendations and technical advice on several biosafety issues based on technical information and decisions are taken by the National Biosafety Council
86	Syrian Arab Republic	They sent invitation to attend the meeting, NFP, codex member, We met when at the urgent matter.
87	Tanzania	Currently there is no food safety assessment conducted. But as per Biosafety regulatory framework there should be National Biosafety Committee and institutional biosafety committee which have to be convened to discuss the submitted dossier
88	Thailand	The sub-committee of GM food safety assessment comprises representatives from academic and competent agencies, such as Biotech, FDA, ACFS, and DOA. They are convened physical meeting 4-5 times per year depending on the quantity and quality of data and information. With this regard, they discuss on the information using for safety assessment and dietary exposure. The safety assessment is consistent with Codex Guidelines and National standards (TAS standards). The dietary exposure is evaluated using Thai food consumption data.
89	Timor-Leste	Those mechanism are more effective to our country use
90	Togo	The focal point for OGM platform, the representative of the future legal authority for biosafety, Researcher on the topic,
91	Turkey	Biosafety applications in Turkey are carried out within the framework of the Biosafety Law (No.5977) which entered into force in 26 September

		2010 and its relevant regulations. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry makes a “Decision” about applications on GMO and products via taking Scientific Committees’ risk assessment and socio-economic assessment into account. List of experts has been made up by the evaluation of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry from the applicants who applied via using the Biosafety Clearing-House Mechanism of Turkey. Applicants were faculty members and experts of Universities and TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). In this context, scientific committees hold regular physical meetings in the evaluation of applications related to GMOs. In addition to regular scientific committee meeting, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry holds meetings with relevant Ministries in the decision-making process.
92	Uganda	Sharing information and news on GM foods, and outcomes of other relevant activities/bodies such as Codex
93	United Arab Emirates	Establishing working groups and committees and invite : government\ private\ industry\ academic\ suppliers
94	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
95	United States of America	Review teams meet as needed and this could be several times during the review process (depending on the complexity of the submission). These meetings discuss the overall submission and whether all relevant questions were address and then we may also meet, if needed, to talk about specific questions
96	Uruguay	risk managers have regular meetings every 15 days
97	Yemen	Stakeholders are involved in genetically modified foods. Meetings are held as needed. Topics related to GM food problems are discussed
98	Zambia	Decisions are done with Board members after the SAC and the technical committees have evaluated the applications. Meetings are convened quarterly or after every SAC meeting.
99	Zimbabwe	The National Biotechnology Authority which is the national competent authority for all biotechnology and biosafety matters is involved; it is responsible for GM food safety assessment and may consult relevant stakeholders if necessary.

2.11 Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers

Question: Which communication mechanisms do GM food safety assessors and decision makers during the food safety assessment process in your country? Please select one or more options (multiple answers possible).

- A. Regular physical meetings
- B. Regular online meetings
- C. Ad hoc online meetings
- D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders
- E. Web-based information

F. Other (please explain)

Table 20. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers

Answer	Number
A. Regular physical meetings	64
B. Regular online meetings	11
C. Ad hoc online meetings	8
D. Mailing list with relevant stakeholders	35
E. Web-based information	25
F. Others	47

Table 21. Communications between platform focal points and decision makers (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	No mechanism
2	Angola	We will prefer to use regular physical meeting and the mailing list with future stakeholders
3	Argentina	Official gazette and press releases
4	Australia	See the responses for questions 7 and 9.
5	Bangladesh	Not applicable at this moment as there is no competent authority in my country to assess the safety of GM foods.
6	Cambodia	It is not updated the WG and the committee.
7	Cameroon	There is not communication mechanism related to GM food safety.
8	Chile	-
9	Denmark	Ad hoc physical meeting with national experts if needed.
10	Dominica	ad hoc physical meeting
11	Ecuador	We don't have still a communication mechanism, but in the future we have liking carry out regular physical meeting
12	Egypt	My country is in the process in developing a regulatory framework that requires the competent authority to conduct and review safety assessment of GM food.
13	Fiji	While the Ministry of Environment is the focal point due to impacts of LMOs on biodiversity, there are other national authorities who are responsible for monitoring and or managing biosafety issues in Fiji. The Ministry of Health is the competent authority of food safety in Fiji. Biosecurity Authority of Fiji is mandated to protect Fiji's agricultural sector from the introduction and spread of animal and plant pests and diseases, facilitate access to viable agro-export markets and ensure compliance of Fiji's agro-exports to overseas market requirements. Other government ministries include the Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority, and the Consumer Council. These national authorities have not been designated NAUs. This is because the Biosafety Framework has not been finalized and implemented. However without the Framework there is an agreement on how Biosafety issues are addressed in Fiji due to the current mandate undertaken by these authorities
14	Finland	The GM food safety assessment is done by EFSA, so we have no national GM food safety assessors.
15	France	As explained in Q7, at national level, there is a separation between food safety assessors and the national focal point which is a food safety risk manager (i.e. decision makers). At European Union level, see answers from the European Commission.

16	Gabon	The minister in charge of agriculture drafted proposals for laws regulating the evaluation of GM foods and food security, he submitted them to parliament.
17	Georgia	generally we use mailing list, but in this case we don't use anything because it is not conducted
18	Germany	See answer to question 9. Since GM food safety assessors and focal points / alternate focal points are working in the same department of the German competent authority (BVL), the same as stated above for communication between focal points/alternate focal points and decision makers also applies to communication between GM food safety assessors and decision makers.
19	Guyana	No detail mechanism exist currently
20	Jamaica	No GM food safety assessment mechanisms have been developed.
21	Latvia	GMO food assessment is done by EFSA, at national level we do not conduct GM food assessment.
22	Lebanon	Not yet applicable
23	Liberia	None
24	Libya	I don't have idea
25	Malawi	There are no designated GM food safety assessors therefore there is no established communication mechanism with decision makers
26	Mauritius	Not yet applicable.
27	Myanmar	No mechanism in place as regulatory framework is in the developing process
28	Namibia	
29	Nepal	There is communication mechanism of mailing and physical meeting of decision makers during the food safety issues in the country.
30	Netherlands	Regular meetings are organized by the Dutch GMO Office. Risk assessors and decision makers participate in these meetings.
31	New Zealand	E-mail correspondence
32	Panama	-
33	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)- please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union
34	Qatar	N/A
35	Rwanda	Not in place
36	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no communication between GM food safety assessors and decision makers right now. But since we must harmonize our legislation with European Union and therefore allow applications for GM food in future, experiences from other countries in that respect are very valuable for us. Expert Council on Biosafety (assessors for other types of GMO applications) is formed by Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (decision maker for other types of GMO applications) and is reasonable to believe that they will also act as safety accessory and decision makers for GM food (after legislation harmonization).
37	Singapore	Email
38	South Sudan	Not regularly
39	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
40	Sri Lanka	None

41	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	No GM food assessment is currently being conducted
42	Togo	Ad hoc physical meeting
43	Tunisia	In the case where GM food safety procedures will begin, certainly all opinions might be used
44	Uganda	Periodic physical meetings for the GM food safety assessors and ad hoc physical meetings for the decision makers
45	United States of America	I'm not sure what the question is asking. If this refers to meetings of the review staff- we use regular physical meetings and ad hoc online meetings
46	Yemen	The meeting is not regular. When there is a specific problem
47	Zambia	We also write physically to the companies

2.12 Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers

Question: Please explain briefly about the selected mechanisms above, e.g. who are involved, how often they are convened and what are discussed.

Table 22. Communications between GM food safety assessors and decision makers

1	Angola	Unfortunately we do not know for wale.
2	Antigua and Barbuda	General food safety issues are discussed within various committee meetings convened to discuss issues of standards, agricultural health and food safety, environment and other related areas. When the need arises, issues of GM food safety assessment would be tabled and discussed.
3	Argentina	Official gazette and press releases
4	Armenia	Same, is it the new area of investigation, so we need to start with the legislative system
5	Azerbaijan	Scientists, policy makers,
6	Bangladesh	Not applicable at this moment as there is no competent authority in my country to assess the safety of GM foods.
7	Belarus	GM food safety assessors and decision makers meet at a meeting of the Expert Council when deciding on each specific GMO.
8	Bhutan	Departmental Heads of public health, agriculture, livestock, conservation , forestry, BCCI, Environment, etc. and as per the law meeting is twice a year and discuss/apprise issues related biosafety.
9	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	The biosafety committee is convened when the presentation of a new folder for the evaluation of an event occurs, from that moment both decision makers as well as advisors, hold meetings to approve the holding of an event and to evaluate the safety if this is accepted, in this case periodic meetings are held according to need, e-mails and information of the network are exchanged
10	Bosnia and Herzegovina	The GMO Council is a body composed of seven members coming from the scientific and academic community and possessing relevant knowledge related to the use of GMOs. The body operates within the Food Safety Agency of BiH which provides them with all the necessary professional support and which is the central authority for all GMO matters in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The GMO Council meets several times a year and examines a variety of issues including requirements for the placing on the market of Bosnia and Herzegovina products containing or originating from GMOs as well as requirements for deliberate release and contained use of GMOs.
11	Botswana	It is not everybody who has access to information technology that is why physical meetings are preferred

12	Bulgaria	The European Commission attends the GMO Panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
13	Burkina Faso	All governmental technical departments involved in food safety. They are convened as much as necessary and according to Financial availability for meeting and work sessions
14	Burundi	Selected mechanisms above are accordingly with communications capacities in place. Representatives from ministries, public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and associative movements, trade union organizations whose mission or scope or competence has some relation to the use of modern biotechnology and Biosafety management are involved and often convened to discuss each GMOs issue raised in order to report to the decision maker to statute on it.
15	Cabo Verde	In Cabo Verde, there is the National Food Control System, where government officials, representatives of economic operators and consumer representatives discuss food security problems. There is also the National Codex Alimentarius Commission, which also deals with issues related to Codex Alimentarius standards, and their incorporation into national laws. These committees meet regularly twice a year and extraordinarily when there is a need. The Secretariat sends e-mails to Committee members, sharing relevant information on food safety and soliciting their opinion on the subject, when necessary. Are also shared on the website of the Health Regulatory Authority, which is responsible for controlling the food safety of novel foods, information relevant to the general public, on food safety, including genetically modified foods.
16	Cambodia	A few meeting to disseminate law and regulation, after law and regulation on were first disseminated in to the high level of committee members and WG- members from line Ministries related in LMO. The meeting is not regularly, but ad hoc.
17	Cameroon	The communication mechanism concerning GM food safety is not developed.
18	Canada	Please see description for Question 11.
19	Central African Republic	We meet once a quarter; the stakeholders are the government, the consumers, the industrialists, the researchers. Codex standards are discussed and adapted to the results of studies conducted in the country. We never talk about GMOs in our meeting.
20	Chile	-
21	Congo	The contacts with stakeholders by mails and often physical meetings
22	Croatia	Ministry of Health, Ministry of agriculture and Council of GMOs
23	Cyprus	Experts from different public sectors and different specializations. The meetings are not very often.
24	Czechia	The European Commission attends the GMO panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for

		additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
25	Denmark	The national process in Denmark does not include physical meetings between national experts and the DVFA unless specific questions need to be discussed. The Danish national Experts participate in physical meeting within the EFSA GMO-Network. The European Commission attends the GMO Panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
26	Dominica	Bureau of standards, Environmental Health Ministry of Agriculture when there is a food safety issue
27	Ecuador	We don't have still a communication mechanism, but in the future we have liking involve all of stakeholder of the food chain
28	Eritrea	The Regulatory Services Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Hamelmalo Agricultural College. Once 2-3 months discussed on GM foods.
29	Eswatini	Refer to 10 above
30	European Union	The European Commission attends the GMO Panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address member states (MS) or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
31	Fiji	Different government ministries play their own role as specified in our current legislations.
32	Finland	See the answer of the European Commission. Finland attends regular to the EFSA and Commission meetings.
33	France	See Q7, Q9, Q11 and answers from the European Commission.
34	Gabon	Ministers in charge of agriculture, fisheries, research, environment, waters and forests, trade, customs, health meet and the Minister of Agriculture is the spokesperson
35	Georgia	N/A
36	Germany	See answer to question 11.
37	Ghana	There are two bodies involved in the physical meeting. These are the Technical Advisory Committee and the Board. The Technical Advisory Committee discusses issues regarding scientific risk assessment of the application. The Board makes the decision based on the information provided by the applicant, the of the risk assessment, comments from the public, and socio-economic considerations regarding the application. The number of meetings involved in each case depends on the nature of the application.
38	Greece	The European Commission attends the GMO Panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular

		emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
39	Grenada	Regular meetings once a month are held with the Biosafety Authority draw from difference organization including Ministry of Agriculture, Health, Finance, Produce Chemist Laboratory, Grenada Bureau of Standard, Custom Port Authority, Farmers and Consumers Organization. Biosafety issues are at the meeting
40	Guyana	None
41	Honduras	Scientists and public officials of Honduras, Normally meetings are held once a year or every time a genetically modified organism is released in the country
42	Indonesia	For website, we also receive comment from public. Usually we post our final summary of assessment and wait for comment for 60 days before we set biosafety commission meeting (the last physical meeting)
43	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Delegates from competent authorities as well as GMO scientists are involved. They meet at least once in a year and discuss on approved dossiers, events which have been or to be imported and is being used in food industry, risk assessment procedures and risk management actions, also legal matters and provisions.
44	Iraq	The food assessment process is on the first stages on my country and regulatory framework is under processing from more than one authority such as COSQC, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Experts and others through meeting and discussing this issue.
45	Ireland	As before
46	Italy	EFSA participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission's comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
47	Jamaica	No GM food safety assessment mechanisms have been developed.
48	Japan	The answer is the same as the above question 10.
49	Kenya	Board members are involved with Meetings are held on quarterly basis
50	Kiribati	Same as in question 8 and 10
51	Latvia	Procedure is prescribed in relevant European Union GMO legislation (Directive 2001/18 and Regulation 1829/2003)
52	Libya	-
53	Lithuania	Delegates from the Health, Agriculture, Environment, Food and Veterinary Services, Research Institutes, Universities. Every quarter.
54	Luxembourg	Luxembourg has a website where information regarding food-safety are published. The site is updated regularly. https://securite-alimentaire.public.lu/fr.html
55	Madagascar	-Food importers, Laboratory managers and President of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee -every six months -The obligation to perform risk analysis for food products derived from modern biotechnology
56	Malawi	No food safety assessment is conducted presently
57	Malaysia	The Chairperson of the GM food safety assessors group attends the meetings of the decision makers to provide technical support and understanding on the recommendations made by the GM food safety assessors group.
58	Maldives	We don't meet often as we have few cases to discuss.

59	Mali	Physical meetings are held with all parties involved (technical departments, universities, consumer associations, laboratories at the time of need. when resources are insufficient, working papers are sent online to interested parties for comments
60	Mauritius	This will still be in line with what is mentioned in 8 above.
61	Montenegro	As above
62	Myanmar	Not relevant
63	Namibia	Meetings involve the Biosafety Secretariat and the Biosafety Council who make recommendation to the minister to make decisions regarding the application during evaluation of application (scheduled calendar). Other Agencies and relevant Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, M. of trade, M. of Environment and M. of health also play a role in decision making on need basis regarding a particular application (human and animal health and environmental safety, trade, and socioeconomic impacts). This are scheduled calendars for GMO application evaluation.
64	Nepal	There is provision of focal persons or representative of the concern stakeholders for the communication and discussion on food safety issues.
65	Netherlands	In these meetings food/feed and environmental risk assessors participate as well as the Dutch GMO Office and policy makers from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management participate
66	Nigeria	Regular stakeholders meetings conducted once every two months.
67	Papua New Guinea	The communication mechanism is by having physical meeting and share relevant website and other information regarding GM Food. Sometimes we used mass media for communication to our population as part of awareness.
68	Paraguay	The members of the biosafety commission, in some cases invited experts, producer associations and the applicant
69	Peru	Similar a la respuesta 10. English translation: Similar to response 8
70	Philippines	If there are concerns that need to be addressed by the assessor, the decision maker may invite them to discuss their assessment. They are convened as the need arises.
71	Qatar	N/A
72	Romania	See 8
73	Samoa	We do consultations with relevant Ministries and so as the public to get their view on food safety assessment.
74	Sao Tome and Principe	Centro de investigação e Direcção Geral do Ambiente English translation: Directorate General for Environment
75	Senegal	The exchanges focus on food safety and national positions on the development of codex alimentarius standards (different sessions).
76	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no selected mechanisms for communication between GM food safety assessors and decision makers right now.
77	Singapore	Who are involved: GM food safety assessors and approving authority How often: as and when there is an industry application What are discussed: outcome of the safety assessment of new industry application
78	Slovakia	The focal point for Slovakia attends regular EFSA meetings of scientific experts and meetings of Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed, section Genetically Modified Food and Feed. It is very useful for

		coordination and cooperation and share of knowledge and political will of the country and opinion of the citizens. EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
79	South Sudan	They are usually selected by their respective institutions.
80	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
81	Sri Lanka	N/A
82	St. Kitts and Nevis	Environment and bureau of standards. Not very often as we are still in the embryonic stages of formalizing a strategy to deal with gmo for plant material
83	Sudan	Food safety is assessed based on technical and science- based information to assist the competent authority in decision making
84	Syrian Arab Republic	When the decision makers invite the stakeholders representatives
85	Tanzania	Currently there is no food safety assessment conducted
86	Thailand	The sub-committee of GM food safety assessment comprises representatives from academic and competent agencies, such as Biotech, FDA, ACFS, and DOA. They are convened physical meeting 4-5 times per year depending on the quantity and quality of data and information. With this regard, they discuss on the information using for safety assessment and dietary exposure. The safety assessment is consistent with Codex Guidelines and National standards (TAS standards). The information on molecular biology, toxicity, allergenicity, composition are discussed what risk has happened and whether it is safe. The dietary exposure is evaluated using Thai food consumption data.
87	Timor-Leste	The decision maker can use regular meeting and regular online to share the any issue about food safety assessments
88	Togo	The focal point for OGM platform, the representative of the future legal authority for biosafety, Researcher on the topic, Assessors
89	Turkey	Biosafety applications in Turkey are carried out within the framework of the Biosafety Law (No.5977) which entered into force in 26 September 2010 and its relevant regulations. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry makes a "Decision" about applications on GMO and products via taking Scientific Committees' risk assessment and socio-economic assessment into account. List of Experts has been made up by the evaluation of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry from the applicants who applied via using the Biosafety Clearing-House Mechanism of Turkey. Applicants were faculty members and experts of Universities and TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). In this context, scientific committees hold regular physical meetings in the evaluation of applications related to GMOs. In addition to regular scientific committee meeting, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry holds meetings with relevant Ministries in the decision-making process.
90	Uganda	The National Biosafety Committee sits quarterly. The absence of the legal framework has affected the proper planning and execution of biotechnology related activities

91	United Arab Emirates	Annual meetings
92	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	The European Commission attends the GMO Panel meetings as an observer. In addition, EFSA also participates to the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health to present its opinions and address MS or Commission' comments or questions. EFSA informs the European Commission, and the MS, on the status of applications by regular emails, including on its communication with applicants (requests for additional information or clarification) and displays this information on its website.
93	United States of America	Review teams meet as needed and this could be several times during the review process (depending on the complexity of the submission). These meetings discuss the overall submission and whether all relevant questions were address and then we may also meet, if needed, to talk about specific questions
94	Uruguay	the coordination of the risk assessment participate at the risk managers meetings and transfer the information to the evaluators, at the end of the year we organize a seminar to meet all
95	Yemen	A meeting with stakeholders is requested (Agriculture / Environment / Specifications / Health / Consumer Protection Society / -Meetings are held to work on national standards for genetically modified foods. Problems related to seeds, grains, fruits, vegetables and others are discussed.
96	Zambia	Members of the Board with one SAC member and the meetings are convened on a quarterly basis.
97	Zimbabwe	GM food safety assessors meet regularly that is on a quarterly basis with the decision makers. The decision makers are the Food Standards Advisory Board (FSAB). The Board participates in national food safety and quality control programs and make, amend and revise food laws and regulations.

2.13 Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment

Question: Please explain if you have effective communication mechanisms with FP/AFP of other countries.

- A. No
- B. Yes (please explain)

Table 23. Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment

Answer	Numbers	Response rate
A. No	82	71%
B. Yes (please explain)	34	29%
Total	116	100%

Table 24. Partnerships and collaborations with other countries on GM food safety assessment (other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Angola	We know that Mozambique focal point already performed the food safety assessment and we have a very good communication with them.
2	Argentina	Needed only occasionally, mostly through previous acquaintance (interpersonal contacts)
3	Armenia	Seminars, international conferences, workshops, trainings are very important for our experts of different levels.

4	Australia	The AFP is a member of the OECD Novel foods and Feed WG and has contact with OECD contacts. FSANZ also has bilateral arrangements with food safety agencies in other countries.
5	Botswana	Relies in the FAO GM Foods platform
6	Bulgaria	Please see the answer to Q.10
7	Czechia	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
8	Denmark	Communication mechanisms exist between the Danish FP and the competent authorities for GMO in other European Union Member states. The DVFA has no effective communication mechanisms with countries outside European Union regarding GMO.
9	Eritrea	Because of the poor internet connectivity in my country, Majority of our contact each other through physical meeting.
10	Eswatini	Through emails and social media
11	European Union	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states (MS) a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
12	Finland	Finland participates the meetings arranged By EFSA (GMO network) and the European Commission and is in contact with other member states.
13	France	See answers from the European Commission.
14	Germany	EFSA (for tasks of EFSA see answer to question 9) convenes a meeting of the GMO network, composed of MS risk assessment bodies, on an annual basis to inform the network and discuss latest scientific developments. BVL is represented in the GMO network. Also, BVL staff usually attends meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (cf. answer to question 9).
15	Greece	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.

16	Honduras	Through the platform: Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) established by the Cartagena protocol on Biosafety
17	Kuwait	Through the meetings held by FAO
18	Latvia	We have regular meetings with GMO experts from Baltic/Nordic countries once per year where topical questions are discussed
19	Lithuania	With representatives from neighboring countries.
20	Malaysia	Not applicable - only FP, no AFP appointed
21	Namibia	Most of our imports are coming from South Africa, the communication involve requesting information on Risk Assessment of various approved events.
22	New Zealand	Australia and New Zealand operate under a joint food standard in relation to GM foods so there is close communication with the Australian Focal point
23	Nigeria	Through phone calls and emails.
24	Paraguay	MERCOSUR has a specialized group (CBA), the agricultural council of the south also has a group (GT5) and with some organizations such as the OECD, IICA, among others
25	Samoa	We do have a platform on Codex where all FPs/AFP of other countries communicate. We also have each other's email where we share information.
26	Senegal	We have communication mechanisms for focal points at the African and regional scales for biosecurity and codex alimentarius.
29	Slovakia	After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.
27	South Sudan	There is, but through different institutions e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, National Bureau of Standards, etc. then they communicate to others which is still a challenge. And is not effective.
28	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question n°3.
30	Tunisia	We knew FP/AFP of other countries through the FAO-GM Food Platform but we did not have fruitful discussions and ideas exchange
31	United Arab Emirates	Online system
32	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Other FP/AFP in European Union member state countries. After a favorable EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes to member states a draft authorization decision, on which they will vote within a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. If there is no opinion of the Committee, an Appeal Committee is convened where member states can adopt or reject the proposal. If the Appeal Committee fails to reach an opinion by a qualified majority, the Commission has to take the responsibility for the final decision. In case of new relevant scientific information related to a GMO for which an authorization has been already granted, the Commission will inform the MS by email and share information on a dedicated website.

33	United States of America	We have formal and informal relationships with other regulators. Some of the formal relationships fall under the guide of a Memorandum of Understanding that let us discuss reviews with other countries. We find this tool to be very useful- even though we don't use it very often.
34	Uruguay	We contact by email and in workshops and seminars

2.14 How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment

Question: How are the results of GM food safety assessment shared in your country (single answer possible)?

- A. Both on our organization/institution's website and other international platforms including the Platform that are accessible to the public and/or relevant stakeholders.
- B. Only on our organization's website
- C. Only on international platforms including the Platform
- D. We are in the process of sharing results of GM food safety assessment either our website or other platforms
- E. We don't share results of GM food safety assessment either on our website or other platforms
- F. Other (Please indicate it in the space below)

Table 25. How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment

Answer	Numbers	Response rate
A. Both on our organization/institution's website and other international platforms	31	27%
B. Only on our organization's website	5	4%
C. Only on international platforms	3	3%
D. In the process of sharing results of GM food safety assessment	18	16%
E. We don't share results of GM food safety assessment	23	20%
F. Other (Please indicate it in the space below)	36	31%
Total	116	100%

Table 26. How/where to store results of GM food safety assessment (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Armenia	We haven't started to GM food safety assess yet. We haven't results for sharing. If it will be we are ready to sharing information.
2	Bangladesh	Not applicable at this moment as there is no competent authority in my country to assess the safety of GM foods.
3	Cambodia	We have never do risk assessment of GM food safety.
4	Central African Republic	We do not have data on OGMS
5	Chile	Not organization in website for food GM
6	Denmark	GMO risk assessments are shared by EFSA/the European Commission and by the DVFA. The Danish national risk assessments are not shared on our website or other platforms as the GMO's are already risk assessed by EFSA.
7	Fiji	GMOs are not accepted in Fiji and all goods must be accompanied by a GMO free certification. Chemical residue testing is not undertaken in Fiji but samples in the past have been shipped to the US for testing. Any goods that do not comply are rejected.
8	Finland	On international platforms and websites that are accessible to the public and/or relevant stakeholders. Nationally the information is shared by relevant mailing lists.

9	Georgia	GM food assessment is not conducted, other assessment's results we share via our website
10	Germany	BVL (national competent authority) sends the results of its assessments of GMO applications as comments to EFSA in writing. BVL comments are not published by BVL but by EFSA on its website as part of the final EFSA opinions on applications.
11	Ghana	So far, Ghana has not considered any application on food assessment. We are yet to do that.
12	Japan	The results are open on our official website and notified to the risk managers who made the request for the assessment.
13	Kiribati	Through emails to relevant government ministries. Websites is currently not available
14	Latvia	The relevant information can be found on EFSA home page.
15	Lebanon	Results could be communicated during certain relevant workshops and master students thesis defense, and personal contacts.
16	Mali	Currently the agency does not have the expertise for the evaluation of GM food safety assessment
17	Mauritius	Not yet applicable. Further to discussion with the Secretary of the National Biosafety Committee, decision whether to share such decision has not yet been taken.
18	Myanmar	no mechanism in place as regulatory framework is in the developing process
19	Nepal	We have to set up the mechanism for GM Food Safety Assessment to share the results of it.
20	New Zealand	Results are shared on the website of the Joint Australia New Zealand Standards setting body (Food Standards Australia New Zealand), and upon the platform
21	Peru	<p>En Perú recién nos encontramos en una primera fase de determinar la línea base de alimentos, esta iniciativa se remonta en octubre de 2013 donde se realizó el taller: “Definición de criterios para los estudios de líneas de base previstas en la Ley N° 29811”, en donde se definieron los criterios mínimos para la elaboración de las líneas de base. Posteriormente, el 11 de septiembre de 2015, en el taller denominado: “Plan bianual para la identificación de centros de origen y diversidad con fines de bioseguridad”, se definió la lista de 10 cultivos priorizados: ají, alfalfa, algodón, calabaza/zapallo, frijol, maíz, papa, papaya, tomate y yuca; y dos crianzas priorizadas: peces ornamentales y trucha, de todos ellos se concluyó el 100% de la línea base para la papa, maíz y algodón, los demás alimentos se encuentran en proceso. La difusión de estos estudios se encuentra en un informe publicado en el portal web de la institución</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MINAM:</p> <p>http://bioseguridad.minam.gob.pe/normatividad/implementacion/cma/</p> <p>English translation:</p> <p>In Peru we are now at the first step of defining a baseline for foods, and this initiative traces back to October 2013, when the workshop called “Definition of criteria for the study of baselines foreseen by Law N° 29811”, where the minimum criteria for the elaboration of baselines were defined. After that, on 11 September 2015, the list of the ten priority commodities was defined during the workshop “Bi-annual plan for the identification of centers of origin and diversity for biosafety purposes”: chili, alfalfa, cotton, pumpkin, beans, maize, potato, papaya, tomato, and manioc; and two breedings: ornamental fish and trout. Among these, 100% of the baselines was</p>

		concluded for potatoes, maize and cotton, while the baselines for other foods are being processed. A report that was published in the web portal of MINAM institution contains all these studies and it can be found at: http://bioseguridad.minam.gob.pe/normatividad/implementacion/cma/ .
22	Congo	By mails with stakeholders
23	Rwanda	no results have been shared so far
24	Senegal	Senegal conducted a risk assessment on food broths. Senegal is also on the process of generating contamination and consumption data for a risk assessment of dietary exposure related to aflatoxins. For biosecurity, risk assessment bodies are being put in place. Capitalization of data from these processes will be shared nationally and internationally (platform)
25	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, there is no results to be shared. But since we must harmonize our legislation with European Union and therefore allow applications for GM food in future, experiences from other countries in that respect are very valuable for us.
26	Singapore	We are in the midst of updating the results of our GM food safety assessment on FAO GM foods Platform.
27	South Sudan	Through the representatives of the different institutions.
28	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question nº3.
29	Sri Lanka	N/A
30	St. Kitts and Nevis	We have no results to share at the moment. We have not engaged in a formal assessment as yet
31	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	We currently do not conduct GM food assessments in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
32	Qatar	N/A
33	Syrian Arab Republic	We do not share any results due we did not do the safety assessment for GM food
34	Thailand	We will share brief results of GM food safety assessment and positive lists on GM FAO Food Platform where the law and regulation have already announced in Royal's Gazette.
35	Netherlands	The results of the GM food safety assessment is used as (advisory) input into the European GMO approval system via the Dutch competent authorities. The results as such are not shared outside the approval system. The overall evaluation by EFSA is public.
36	Tunisia	Until now we don't have any studies about GM food safety assessment, but once done it will be shared or published on organization/institution's website and other international platforms including the Platform that are accessible to the public and/or relevant stakeholders. and also on BCH

2.15 Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform

Question: How do you make use of the FAO GM platform website when conducting GM food safety assessment in your organization/institution (multiple answers possible)?

- To check GM food safety assessment results of other Codex members
- We refer to the FAO GM platform every time when conducting food safety assessment
- To verify food safety assessment data submitted in application dossiers from country of origin of imported GM products
- To study relevant information during situations of LLP
- Other (Please indicate it in the space below)

Table 27. Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform

Answer	Number
A. To check GM food safety assessment results	59
B. When conducting food safety assessment	22
C. To verify food safety assessment data	33
D. To study relevant information during situations of LLP	20
E. Other	49

Table 28. Main purposes to use the FAO GM foods platform (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Angola	We just now are referring to the FAO GM platform to update us on the issue.
2	Armenia	When any new development are adding in the system of GM assessment I refer to the FAO GM platform.
3	Australia	We add approved GM products to the platform for Australia.
4	Bangladesh	Although there is no competent authority exclusively for the safety assessment of foods derived from GM crops, the members of the Biosafety Core Committee (BCC) verify the foods safety data submitted in application dossiers.
5	Bulgaria	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. During the consultations the Bulgarian Risk Assessment Center of Food Chain can submit questions and/or comments.
6	Cambodia	No data on import LMO or GM food, but regulated base on labeling conformance.
7	Cameroon	My Institution has not conducted GM food safety assessment.
8	Central African Republic	We did not do
9	Chile	-
10	Côte d'Ivoire	We don't conduct GM Food safety assessment in our country for the reasons stated above
11	Czechia	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not on national level.
12	Denmark	In case of a situation of LLP Danish authorities and national Experts would seek information in the FAO GM platform website.
13	European Union	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by the European Commission.
14	Fiji	Fiji needs to strengthen its monitoring mechanism on imported foods and food products, especially border controls.
15	Finland	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA, not by the individual countries. So, Finland doesn't use actively the FAO GM platform websites.
16	France	The European Union has put in place its own procedures as regards GM food safety assessment and authorization process including how to deal with LLP situations.
17	Gambia	No GM food safety assessment
18	Georgia	GM food assessment is not conducted
19	Ghana	We have not used it before
20	Guyana	No work is done in this area
21	Honduras	We are in the process of implementing the focal point for platform management
22	Ireland	We don't

23	Italy	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by an Italian specific institute/organism
24	Jamaica	No GM food safety assessment mechanisms have been developed.
25	Kiribati	Still find difficulties using the website.
26	Kuwait	We are in process of setting regulations for food safety assessment
27	Latvia	-
28	Lebanon	Not yet applicable
29	Liberia	None
30	Libya	I don't have idea
31	Luxembourg	used complementary to the EFSA website
32	Mauritius	Not yet applicable
33	Namibia	Our Country has never used FAO GM platform.
34	Peru	<p>Como Punto de Contacto, al verificar en la institución en años pasados ni a la fecha hemos recurrido ni nos han solicitado recurrir a la Plataforma de los GMO. No hemos recibido capacitación al respecto, por consiguiente es complicado el uso de la herramienta, justamente sería importante poder aprovechar la plataforma para que permita transmitir la experiencia a los actores involucrados en la evaluación de la inocuidad de alimentos genéticamente modificados (GMO), así podamos verificar datos de seguridad de alimentos que presentan aquellos en sus certificados con fines de importación y también en su momento la plataforma nos permita compartir los datos de Perú a los miembros.</p> <p>English translation: As a focal point, we haven't resorted to the platform and we weren't reminded to do it. We haven't received training on it, and therefore it is difficult to use such tool, however it would be important to be fully capable of using it in order to provide stakeholders with experience in GM food safety assessments. Then, we would be capable of verifying biosafety data that are presented by those who bring their import certificates and also to share data from Peru with the other members.</p>
35	Poland	Safety assessments are carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)- please see the questionnaire completed by the European Union
36	Portugal	As said, food safety assessment of GM food is conducted at European Union level.
37	Qatar	N/A
38	Romania	The Platform is not used as much. Using of the Platform is good point that can be further explored in the near future by us
39	Rwanda	No GM assessment has been done
40	Serbia	At present, due to total ban on GM food in Serbia, only to monitor developments in other codex members.
41	Slovakia	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by the European Commission or individual countries.
42	South Sudan	There is still a lot to be done on our side to make this process work effectively.
43	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question nº3.
44	Sri Lanka	N/A
45	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	We will use it to check food safety results of other codex members on the platform and also to verify food safety data submitted in application dossiers from country of origin of imported GM products.

46	Tanzania	No food safety assessment is conducted
47	Tunisia	We are not responsible for risk assessment, but we are part of the authorities involved in the evaluation process
48	Uganda	Check for food safety scientific advice
49	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Currently not actively using the platform. The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by the European Commission.

2.16 Main challenges in conducting GM food safety assessments (Only in Questionnaire A)

Question: Are there challenges that your country experiences in conducting GM food safety assessment or sharing the results of GM food safety assessment and would benefit from technical support? List 3 challenges.

[Please DO NOT include the general challenges such as: lack of financial resources, lack of technical capacity, lack of trainings, lack of laboratory infrastructure, equipment and materials, and lack of capacity building program/projects.]

Table 29. Main challenges in conducting GM food safety assessments

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	GMOs issues have been taken into account exclusively in the field of agriculture with the ban on GMO plants in 2000, with however no control or risk management procedures. Concerning GMO food, the installation of the GMO detection laboratory (Constantine biotechnology center) should be able to relaunch the project to implement the biosafety framework and labeling devices for GMO products and the development of GMOs. a system of regulation.
2	Antigua and Barbuda	1. There is need for 'buy-in' (through the presentation of information) by the policy makers of the importance of conducting these assessments. 2. The lack of biosafety legislation results in the lack of a formal structure or system to conduct these assessments. 3. the time and effort that would be required of existing regulators and food safety assessors to present the information to non-scientists in a palatable manner is a major impediment to the forward movement in this regard due to the heavy general workloads of said assessors and regulators.
3	Armenia	The GM assessment step by step we invest in our checking and investigation process in the MoA and Food safety Inspectorate levels. During this way we meet many challenges and gaps.
4	Azerbaijan	There is ban for GM food in Azerbaijan with several laws, we do not import GM foods and organisms. But currently Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency and other organizations are preparing new law on Food Safety and hopefully we could do some changes. There is not also biosafety system here, we need technical support to establish biosafety system, and then we can start some assessments.
5	Bangladesh	Inter-ministerial/inter organizational coordination as food safety not only GM foods are dealt with different ministries or departments. Technical Committee need to be formed to assess GM food safety .Some of the challenges indicated in the parenthesis of Question 16.
6	Bhutan	Difficult to gather biosafety technical working group should there be any application

7	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Since we rely entirely on the European Food Safety Authority, we have not had any major challenges so far, as this is mainly the consideration of materials that have been evaluated by the EFSA
8	Botswana	There are challenges in Botswana because number one there is no law controlling GM foods therefore consumers do ask a lot of questions when they here that GM foods are found in the country. It is a bit difficult to put out the results of the assessments while on the other hand we are all aware that we are not legally equipped to do anything about the findings. Lastly more education about GMO's awareness is critically needed in the country.
9	Bulgaria	It is centralized European activity, done by EFSA and there are well established approach for safety assessment and channels for sharing of the results.
10	Burkina Faso	Main challenges : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of regular physical working group with all technical departments involved in food safety assessment; - Coordination and management of all technical department involved in food safety assessment; - Lack of official Framework to conduct food safety assessment with all technical department at any time
11	Burundi	1. The framework of provisions of the Biosafety still at the stage of draft law from 2006; 2. Lack of importance to follow in the short, medium and long term the effect of the introduction of a GMO on the environment, the human and animal health, also to be able to control the execution of the decisions of the competent authority. 3. The Biosafety inspectors and controllers do not exist, the control and monitoring could be carried out by officers on oath (customs, environment police, police force, phytosanitary inspection, environment inspectors empowered to make arrests and act as policeman, etc.) It would however be interesting to offer them training on movements of GMOs.
12	Cabo Verde	- Organization of a subcommittee within the National Codex Alimentarius Commission to work on genetically modified food issues; - draft law about quality requirements for genetically modified food - build a rapid alert network on the food safety of genetically modified food.
13	Cambodia	-No rule to conduct regular meeting in Committee level - No rule to conduct regular meeting in TWG, - No update Law and regulation.
14	Cameroon	Illegal entrance of GM food lack of awareness lack of communication
15	Central African Republic	Our country still ignores GMOs, it's time to step up
16	Chile	-
17	Congo	- Climatic changes; - No internal platform for collected data in times - Our country is very large with many data, no correct process to analysis them
18	Côte d'Ivoire	The main challenge is to sensitize authorities to revise the law and face the reality
19	Croatia	In my country there is no own GM trials (as field trials or research in laboratory) and there is no own experimental data about GMO which may use as comparator in field of risk assessment

20	Cyprus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The absence of competent authority 2. The political negative position 3. The absence of contact with other specific on Food safety assessment organizations
21	Czechia	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not on national level.
22	Denmark	We have no experience with sharing information on the FAO GM Food platform as this is done by EFSA.
23	Dominica	limited information on the importance GM Food safety assessment process, lack of understanding of the role and function of the focal points and authority , limited knowledge and understanding by authorities on the importance GM food safety assessment
24	Ecuador	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.To commit authorities in the importance to develop GM food safety assessment 2.To share more information to understand that genetic changes in foods do not necessarily result in less safe foods than those produced by conventional techniques. 3.To determine the environmental impact and the possible loss of the biodiversity.
25	Egypt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Egypt needs to establish an effective system to build an institutional and human capacity to design and implement biotechnology regulatory frameworks that have the capability to make a science-based decision on risks and benefits of various GM food as well as provide mechanisms for inspection, monitoring, and compliance. 2.Egypt needs to establish GM food regulatory framework the approach of risk assessment and risk management, involving issues such as how to assess the risk from GMOs, whether to compare potential risks against potential benefits and whether (in addition to human health aspects) to be taken in consideration economic issues, social impacts or ethical concerns. 3.Evaluations and well-designed capacity building programs, customized to the different realities and particular needs of Egypt. Also, require a permanent training cycles for risk assessors, which consider the state of the art criteria and methodologies.
26	Eritrea	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor internet connectivity 2. Limited knowledge and less experience of GM foods among the technical experts 3. Lack information on GM Foods in my country
27	Eswatini	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of coordination between responsible institutions 2. Lack of experience in operating multiple competent authority to focus on various responsibilities, yet the Act permits
28	Fiji	There are currently no specific regulations on GMOs in Fijian legal text. Fiji has however ratified the Cartagena Protocol, a focal point from the Environment Ministry is in charge of the implementation of this protocol in the context of the 'Biosafety Clearing House' (BCH). Fiji's draft Biosafety Framework was the outcome of the BCH I, which is still in draft form and has not been implemented. The establishment of the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, has introduced laws and frameworks that partly address Biosafety, however a stock take of Fiji's laws and frameworks is imperative to understand the scope of existing laws and identify the gaps for Biosafety measures. Without a proper Biosafety Framework, Fiji is implementing aspects of the Biosafety through other legislative and policy framework such as Biosecurity

		Act 2008, Public Health Act, Agriculture Act, Fisheries Act etc. As such prior to finalizing the Biosafety Framework it is critical to undertake a national stock assessment of all existing legislative and policy frameworks in Fiji that directly and or indirectly impact the implementation of the Biosafety Protocol in Fiji. Fiji needs to finalize its Biosafety framework to establish necessary systems and structures that will effectively address Biosafety issues in Fiji and the region, as Biosecurity is part of implementing Border control activities from which extends their scope by detecting Bio risks from introductions at the Borders. In the current regional workshop organized by CBD secretariat in Fiji there is a move to establish a regional network, this will be another mechanism for encouraging bilateral agreements.
29	Finland	There are no specific challenges.
30	France	The European Union has put in place its own procedures.
31	Gabon	Currently GM food assessment are not conducted. Mechanisms are in place for this to be done, it takes a lot of time and need to involve qualified staff
32	Georgia	Lack of knowledge and experience
33	Ghana	No challenges experienced yet, as we have not conducted food assessment before.
34	Grenada	The challenges of GM Food is that it is a trade issue sometime (political) and not scientific hence, discussion could be based on social construct or maybe immediate livelihood seen.
35	Guyana	We only need awareness and facts on GM Foods associated risk and to have same to be shared with stakeholders as a starting point.
36	Honduras	There are no difficulties
37	Iraq	The most important challenge will be the enactment of laws allowing the importation of GM foods and in accordance with the Codex Guidelines. Currently, Soybeans are the only product that allows for genetic modification in Iraq. Convincing public opinion will also be a potential challenge.
38	Ireland	No
39	Italy	The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by an Italian specific institute/organism
40	Jamaica	The challenge faced primarily is that of public and private support; in retrieving research data.
41	Kiribati	1. No bilateral counterpart from trading partner countries. 2. Unavailability of country technical assistant or expert (From FAO/WHO) 3. Gaps in food legislation
42	Latvia	-
43	Lebanon	Challenges are not yet assessed in the absence of the regulatory framework. At this stage, any updated know-how and technical support could be beneficial.
44	Liberia	Lack of legislation of the biosafety act lack of regulatory framework capacity gap in conducting GMO
45	Libya	I don't have idea
46	Lithuania	No problem
47	Luxembourg	-
48	Madagascar	- development of biosecurity law and regulations - safe, appropriate and appropriate use of GMOs for secure sustainable development - new environmental and social issues: climate change
49	Malawi	Generally, Malawi has not identified foods that should be subjected to safety assessment. There are no procedures recommended for safety assessment

		(although it is known that Malawi could adopt the Codex Alimentarius guidelines). There is, generally, no raw and local research data to share. Generally research and regulators in Malawi rely on literature searches and compilations.
50	Maldives	Lack of awareness amongst key stake holders is the main challenge and also need to establish a favorable environment legally with no over lapping mandates.
51	Mali	Insufficiency scientific and technical data on the subject; Ethics constraints; Insufficiency of national and international collaboration on the subject.
52	Mauritius	1. Assistance with the setting up of the local legislations and framework. (To my opinion, the previous Act was not fully promulgated as it did not suit the local context and did not cover some important aspects including transparency. In order to avoid same situation, assistance in terms of guidance on the legal framework and implementation of same is required); 2. Training on implementing GM food safety assessment with case studies (to ensure that the system provisions can be enforced); 3. Empower the laboratory designated for GMO testing
53	Montenegro	Communication can be improved.
54	Myanmar	public acceptance of GM food is challenging public awareness on GM food is less need to strengthen cooperation and collaboration among regulatory agencies
55	Namibia	1. Insufficient information obtained from websites i.e. incomplete risk assessment report from other countries. 2. Poor response from Competent national Authorities when requesting information. 3. Limited web platforms
56	Nepal	Support on development of regulatory framework for addressing GM food safety regulation. technical assistance for establishment of mechanism of GM food safety assessment Development of program and activities
57	Nigeria	Security of research/trial fields.
58	Papua New Guinea	We need to conduct a baseline survey to determine GM Food Safety Assessment to know what type of GM Foods are imported and are available in our country and do analysis to actually determine adequate labelling and Low Level Presence in the food for consumption.
59	Paraguay	Mechanisms to simplify risk analysis and decision-making taking into account familiarity and the long history of safe use with GMOs.
60	Peru	Desafíos: 1 Mayor articulación entre las entidades de gobierno, consumidores y sector privado. 2. Falta una mayor difusión entre los sectores que se reúnen para hacer seguimiento a los avances de los estudios de línea base sobre el uso de la plataforma de GMO y como pueden sacar el mejor aprovechamiento de la misma en la evaluación de la inocuidad de los alimentos. 3. Falta de una mayor difusión de los alimentos genéticamente modificados en la población. English translation: Challenges: 1. More organization among the government, the consumers and the private sector;

		2.Communication about the GM foods platform and how to effectively use it during food safety assessments is still missing within the sectors that meet to follow up with the baselines studies; 3.Communication to the population on GMOs is still missing .
61	Qatar	1. Lack of frame work for assessment 2. Lack of expert review committees to form the guidelines 3. Knowledge gap
62	Romania	-
63	Rwanda	It was recognized that there are numerous challenges that we have, top of which are those related to the commercialization of GM food products and the applications of GM technology in the market place.
64	Samoa	Samoa do not practice any genetic modify organism. But there was an interest shown by researchers for a genetic engineering study on major crops plants such as taro (Talo Niue); to create its resistant ability to withstand taro leaf blight disease pressure however, it was not a feasible practice and also required advanced facilities and more technical expertise. Due to these challenges we encounter, we are working together with a technical expertise (soon to be hired) to develop a safety assessment of GM food safety for Samoa. And we currently in the process of consulting with farmers and those involved to develop an assessment for Samoa.
65	Senegal	Challenges: 1.organization of simulation exercises for the assessment, management and communication of risks related to modified genetically modified foods 2. Generation and submission of data in the GM food platform 3. Exploitation of data from the GM food platform.
66	Serbia	Due to total ban on GM food from 2009, there is no current safety assessments and no current experiences in challenges. However, sooner or later, Serbia must harmonize its legislation with European Union and allow applications for GM food, so we will then have that type of experience. Major challenge in future will be lack of practical experience in conducting GM food safety assessment in last 10 years due to total ban on GM feed and food in Serbia. Serbia has qualified experts in needed fields of expertise, but need for technical support can be revealed in conducting actual assessments. It can be foreseen that LLPs and asynchronous approvals will be among important issues in Serbia, too. Other challenge will be new gene editing and mutagenesis techniques that most probably will be treated differently in different regulation systems. As indication, now there is European Union Court decision from 2018 placing it under GMO legislation and different practice in US and Canada.
67	Slovakia	There are no specific challenges.
68	South Sudan	As identified above about being on the process of establishing the challenge is: 1. To bring all the stakeholders on one page 2. Establishment of the road map 3. Establishing a strong network so that any information is shared and this one of the tasks that are given to the focal point.
69	Spain	The answer to this survey must be linked to European Union answer. See answer to question 3.
70	Sri Lanka	Lack of financial resources, lack of technical capacity, lack of trainings, lack of laboratory infrastructure, equipment and materials, and lack of capacity building program/projects
71	St. Kitts and Nevis	Human Resources to be dedicated to this task. Need a step by guide and or good SOP's for conducting the assessment.

72	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Biosafety Legislation has not been passed in Parliament
73	Sudan	- Presence of low level of GMO in food assistance consignment; -Harmonization of national standards and technical regulations with international system; - Establishment of proper monitoring system for GMOs food products
74	Syrian Arab Republic	Decrease on the awareness about the GM food. - Use the GM food without assessment results. - Enforcement of law related GM
75	Tanzania	Willingness of decision/ or policy makers in conducting and sharing GM food safety assessment results Acceptance of GMO products in the country
76	Thailand	1. Very limited number of toxicology experts; 2. Limited availability of local laboratories for toxicity test; 3. Consistency in interpretation of appropriate oral toxicity studies in paragraph 38 in the Codex guideline for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant -DNA plant
77	Timor-Leste	The challenges are: 1. lack of coordination among the stake holders relevant. 2. We didn't have any guideline for conducting food safety assessment. 3. there is no regular meeting to share information about food safety among relevant ministry
78	Togo	1.We still need a legal basis to deal with GM products 2.We a better data flow about what enter our country 3.We may need a cooperation with more advanced country on the subject (as model)
79	Tunisia	1.Toxicity and allergenicity assessment; 2.The GM food safety assessment process (interpretation of data in dossiers, checklist, flow of the actions, etc.); 3.Risk communication on GM food safety
80	Uganda	1) Lack of a legal instrument to manage, guide and regulate activities related to GM foods and biotechnology in general; 2) Negative attitude towards the subject Genetic Engineering/ Modification; 3) Limited expertise to conduct safety assessments on GM foods safety
81	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Not applicable. The risk assessment of GM food is carried out by EFSA and not by the European Commission.
82	Yemen	1.Challenging the presence of international meetings of genetically modified foods that challenge key priority issues face-to-face. 2.Challenge in conducting surveys of the extent to which genetically modified foods are used in Yemen. 3.The challenge to set up a network electronic link to all relevant GM foods national authorities.
83	Zambia	(a) Absence of contingency plan to maintain knowledge after members of the current board and scientific advisory committee as panels rotate when their term of office ends. (b) Lack of understanding on how best to interact with consumers due to lack of baseline surveys on communication channels and language levels. (c) Reduced technical staff to handle dossiers at the National Biosafety Authority secretariat.

84	Zimbabwe	<p>1.Strong stakeholder differences in perception over the utility and safety of modern biotechnology techniques and products.</p> <p>2.Outdated existing frameworks which may need to be updated to cater for advances in the field of biotechnology.</p> <p>3.Striking a balance between the judicious use of biotechnology for socioeconomic development and addressing the possible threats of some aspects of modern biotechnology on the national economy, human health, socio-cultural interests and the environment.</p>
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2.17 Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP (Only in Questionnaire B)

Question: How do you make use of the FAO GM foods platform website in resolving situations of low-level presence (LLP) (multiple answers possible)?

- A. We have referred to the platform to resolve situations of LLP
- B. We refer to the platform whether LLP situations occur or not
- C. We haven't referred to the platform to resolve situations of LLP
- D. Other (please explain)

Table 30. Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP

Answer	Numbers	Response rate
A. We have referred to the platform to resolve LLP situations	1	6%
B. We refer to the platform whether LLP situations occur or not	2	11%
C. We haven't referred to the platform to resolve LLP situations	11	61
D. Other	5	28%
Total	18	100%

Table 31. Purpose of using the platform in resolving situations of LLP (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Australia	FSANZ is the agency that performs the food safety assessments but is not the agency responsible for LLP issues. LLP is considered a compliance issue and falls under the remit of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR). In these situations FSANZ may provide DAWR with risk advice on the LLP event. At this stage, FSANZ has not relied on the platform to prepare risk advice in LLP situations.
2	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	When only one soybean event has been approved and considering that the biosafety regulations are very old, there have been no situations of presence of LLP in the country, so the platform is not used for this purpose
3	European Union	The European Union has a zero-tolerance policy for non-authorized GMOs. So far no applicant has made use of the EFSA "Guidance for the risk assessment of the presence at low level of genetically modified plant material in imported food and feed under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003".
4	United States of America	We have not been in an LLP situation to date.
5	Uruguay	We have not needed at the moment to solve a situation of LLP

2.18 Areas of expertise and countries offering support (Only in Questionnaire B)

Question: Which areas of expertise on GM food safety would your country can provide technical support to less developed countries (multiple answers possible)?

- A. Allergenicity and toxicity
- B. Molecular biology
- C. Compositional analysis
- D. Bioinformatics
- E. Other (please explain)

Table 32. Areas of expertise and countries offering support

Answer	Number
A. Allergenicity and toxicity testing	10
B. Experiments in molecular biology	11
C. Compositional analysis of GM foods	8
D. Application of bioinformatics tools and techniques	7
E. Others	7

Table 33. Areas of expertise and countries offering support (Other responses)

#	Country	Response
1	Australia	While FSANZ has on occasion provided technical support to other countries, we are a small agency with limited resources and the ability to provide support can only be done on a case-by-case basis and will be dependent on availability of suitably qualified staff and resources.
2	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Considering that only the safety assessment of a soybean event has been approved, the country has not developed areas of specialization in this topic, so it would be impossible to provide technical support to other countries
3	European Union	Any area upon specific request, in full cooperation with EFSA and interested European Union member states.
4	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	GMO detection, Institutional capacity building on biosafety
5	Japan	Hard to answer at this moment
6	Malaysia	We have limited capacity
7	Uruguay	I am not sure if we are ready to provide technical support yet in food safety, we could in environmental risk assessment

2.19 Observations and comments

Question: Please feel free to share any other observations relevant to this exercise you might have.

Table 34. Observations and comments

#	Country	Response
1	Algeria	It is a good exercise to better understand the interest of the GM platform. The organization of the meeting can only strengthen this networking and allow better communication
2	Angola	We are expecting have in the near future.
3	Antigua and Barbuda	There is a general paucity of assessment references for use of GM foods in smaller, non-GM producing, countries who consume but do not have the capacity to investigate the effects, if any, of such consumption on their populations.

4	Australia	Due to the structure of Food Standards Australia New Zealand, the GM food assessors are the FP and AFP thus some of the questions in this survey were difficult to answer. We hope what we have provided is of use.
5	Bangladesh	The National Committee on Biosafety (NCB) which is the highest Regulatory Body deal with biosafety issues related to GM crops has suggested a Technical Committee headed by the Director General of Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI). However, BSTI authority regretted to take the lead due to lack of sufficient capacity in their organization to assess the safety of GM foods. So, there should be a National Technical Committee who may take decision on the safety of GM foods.
6	Bhutan	N/A
7	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Currently at the insistence of a producer sector is developing an abbreviated procedure for the introduction of 2 events for the production of biofuels, however there are many shortcomings related to the interpretation of information, evaluation processes and regulations
8	Botswana	Due to food security reasons in Southern Africa where Botswana is located especially because of drastic climatic conditions the method the food is produced is not always a priority instead governments are focused on ensuring that the food is available. The safety of the food is not an issue in these circumstances. Apart from this there are other competing critical health issues like diseases which need to be addressed before anything else.
9	Bulgaria	N/A
10	Burkina Faso	My country really need support to establish a regular Framework to conduct at any time food safety assessment and GM-Food analysis risks. We really need support to organize an official department in charge of food safety assessment and Tools to conduct it.
11	Burundi	Even if Burundi is in processing of GM safety Platform, and even it is my first time to this kind of exercise, I find that it is very interesting. I could not respond correctly at all questions as you want, but I still wish that in the future, I will answer with all information collected. But what is answer is the reality of my Country. Best Regards.
12	Cambodia	N/A
13	Cameroon	Cameroon has a law and a decree related to GMO in general.
14	Central African Republic	This exercise is necessary for my country, because we realize our weaknesses and limitations in GMOs.
15	Chile	The approach of GMO seeds are strongly regulated for exporting (www.sag.cl) OGM.
16	Congo	Difficult to share data and information with stakeholders in time
17	Côte d'Ivoire	It's true that when you talk about challenges you are excluding laboratories equipment and training, but it's practically what we need to carry out the GM Food conformity assessment activities
18	Czechia	Czechia fully benefit from the common European Union approach, so do other member states. So, our answers are similar. But I am interested in answers of third countries.
19	Eritrea	My country would like to have effective communication and sharing of experience with other countries such as lessons that can be learnt and their achievements.
20	Fiji	Thanks.
21	Gabon	In the case of my country, a legal framework is being discussed to allow or not assessment of GM foods
22	Georgia	N/A

23	Grenada	The Caribbean Countries need to have one policy that will guide it Management Strategy on GMO.
24	Guyana	This has been a reasonable fact-finding exercise
25	Honduras	Due to the change in personnel, there was a delay in sending this questionnaire. Fortunately, it was already possible to designate a person who meets the profile to be the focal point.
26	Iraq	There is no observations about this exercise
27	Israel	I think it can be of great help to experts of small countries if there will be a list of experts to whom you can contact with specific questions that arise during the assessment of application dossiers.
28	Kenya	The interaction of the various focal points needs enhancement, even if through on-line fora. This would greatly facilitate decision making process
29	Kiribati	Establishing our bilateral with other CODEX members from other country to learn from each other.
30	Latvia	-
31	Lebanon	Raising awareness of the decision makers and competent authorities is a priority task in order develop/implement the national regulatory framework for the GM food assessment.
32	Libya	In our national regulations all GM foods are forbidden in the country
33	Luxembourg	
34	Madagascar	We would like to have more technical support from our organization
35	Malawi	Currently Malawi does not have specific legislation on food safety assessment. However, there are various Policies, Act and Regulations that marginally consider food safety. e.g. Biosafety Act, Malawi Bureau of Standards Act, Consumer Protection Act, Public Health Act, the Pharmacy Medicines and Poisons Act. Malawi is in the process of establishing an institutional framework for food and feed safety assessment. The preliminary considerations are: who will be responsible for conducting the assessments among 3: Ministry of Health? Ministry of Agriculture? Malawi Bureau of Standards? A team has been appointed (July 2019) to start the process, under the leadership of the Biosafety Registrar.
36	Malaysia	Interested to know how other countries have been using the Platform for LLP issues
37	Maldives	Would appreciate if FAO or other relevant agency could assess the gaps nationally in order to fulfil the requirements of FAO. Regional knowledge sharing plat form should be in place in order to increase knowledge on GM foods.
38	Mali	We will be glad of any contribution allowing us to be operational in GM food safety assessment
39	Mauritius	Sharing of information between the different concerned focal points is important within the country. All stakeholders, including the national codex focal point or representative should be on the national committee. A system for ensuring transparency in dealings should also be considered. Achievable time frames should also be set.
40	Namibia	FAO platform is new to my country and could solve a lot of hiccups experienced during the evaluation of applications.
41	Nepal	There is need of support for development of national regulatory framework for GM food safety as well as adequate awareness and capacity building on GM food safety assessment.

42	Netherlands	We see that, with the advent of gene-edited plant varieties, the definition of GMOs is becoming less clear globally, this will challenge the applicability of GMO-related databases, including the FAO GM Foods Platform.
43	Papua New Guinea	It is very important to have Agriculture and Biotechnology Regulatory Framework in place to provide environment conducive to address issues and concerns at the molecular level,
44	Peru	-
45	Qatar	N/A
46	Rwanda	none
47	Samoa	Samoa in 10 years back was in the process of developing a food assessment process however due to the lack of resources at those times we couldn't continue the project. Nowadays with the speed of technology and information, we are now in the process of consulting with farmers and those who are relevant in developing this assessment for Samoa.
48	Senegal	It is a very interesting exercise to review challenges to ensure a good risk analysis of food safety.
49	Serbia	Serbia has total ban on GM food and feed since adoption of new GMO law in 2009. That ban was introduced in parliament procedure, contrary to Draft Law prepared by experts and relevant ministry in charge of GMO (Ministry in charge of agriculture), and contrary to Law Proposal sent to the Parliament by Serbian Government. Law from 2009 is main obstacle for Serbia accession to WTO and it is not in compliance with Serbia - European Union obligations (Serbia is candidate country for accession to European Union and must harmonize its GMO legislation with European Union legislation). It is expected that GMO legislation in Serbia would be changed to fulfill requests of WTO and European Union memberships, but there is serious opposition to that change in Serbian public and that decision is political. There will be no new information to be added by our focal points to the FAO GM food portal before legislation change.
50	South Sudan	As the focal point of my country, my observation is that we are still having a lot to be done in this process, but as some are already there it is a good chance to learn from them and set the process in place lasing with others in the same process.
51	St. Kitts and Nevis	We need a good model to learn from to do a formal assessment
52	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	A Biosafety committee is in the process of being established in St. Vincent and the Grenadines
53	Sudan	Integrated knowledge management on food safety assessment could be also considered
54	Syrian Arab Republic	I confirmed our need for capacity building related GMOs and LMOs
55	Tanzania	My country was about to conduct GM food safety assessment in some years ago, but the dossier was rejected because the intended users of the product were children under 5 years contrary to Tanzania Food Drugs and Cosmetics (Marketing of Foods and Designated Products for Infants and Young Children) Regulations 2013.
56	Togo	It is ok
57	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Not applicable

58	United States of America	One of the best tools in our program is the ability of firms to talk with us before making a submission. This is invaluable because it helps make sure that the relevant data are collected and it provides for a more predictable outcome.
59	Yemen	Please survey the extent to which genetically modified products are used nationally.
60	Zambia	The pathways to harm are not so well defined in that one has to think broadly but without evidence. Especially the effects of the use of herbicides and its relation to the GM product. There is need to do a lot of public awareness for people to understand the technology and its benefits in my country.

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