

DNA Barcoding in south, southeast, and east Asia Call for Participation in a Regional Meeting

Taipei, Taiwan, Friday, 21 September 2007

The Consortium for the Barcode of Life (CBOL), in cooperation with Academia Sinica and BioNET-INTERNATIONAL, will hold a one-day regional meeting on “DNA barcoding” in Taipei, Taiwan. This meeting will take place immediately following the three-day Second International Barcode of Life Conference, to be held on the campus of Academia Sinica on 18-20 September 2007.

This message is being sent to ask you to forward this message to relevant colleagues and to solicit your suggestions for potential participants in the meeting. Funds will be available to support some of the anticipated 50 participants, including travel to Taipei and costs of attending the three-day International Conference and the one-day regional meeting.

DNA barcoding is an emerging global standard for the identification of species using a short gene sequence from a standardized position in the genome. Barcoding is proving useful as a reliable, cost-effective tool for basic and applied research, and for a wide variety of applications in which species identifications are critical. Examples include: controlling agricultural pests, disease vectors, and invasive species; protecting endangered species; and ensuring food quality. CBOL is an international initiative that promotes the development and use of DNA barcoding. CBOL is hosted by the Smithsonian Institution and has 150 Member Organizations from more than 45 countries.

The regional barcode meeting will be for upper-level researchers, policy-makers and officials in universities, museums, government agencies, NGOs, and private sector companies involved in:

- Taxonomy and basic research in biodiversity, ecology, ecosystems and conservation;
- Applied research in the agriculture, environment, and public health sectors; and
- Regulatory and commercial activities (including international trade) involving plants and animals.

During the three-day International Conference, participants will gain a clearer understanding of DNA barcoding and its varied applications, and of the limitations and responsible use of barcoding. Following the Conference, participants in the regional barcode meeting will spend one day:

1. Discussing the potential applications of DNA barcoding to challenges facing countries in the region;
2. Assessing the region’s capacity to conduct barcoding projects, and the greatest obstacles and needs related to infrastructure and training that limit the region’s barcoding abilities;
3. Identifying barcoding projects that would address the highest priorities in the region;
4. Discussing the need for intra-regional networking and intercontinental partnerships through which barcoding projects can be conducted; and
5. Initiating the formation of a Regional Steering Committee for barcoding, and/or steering committees for the barcoding projects identified as the highest priorities during the meeting.

CBOL and the BioNET LOOPS in the region (SACNET, EASIANET and ASEANET) anticipate working with institutes and countries in the region in the weeks and months following the meeting. The goal will be to develop action plans and proposals for funding barcoding activities, as well as:

- In-country training activities;
- Research training fellowships in partner laboratories;
- Infrastructure improvement such as equipment acquisition; and
- Other forms of high-priority capacity-building identified during the regional meeting.

Please send your nominations for meeting participants to Shen-Horn Yen, (shenhornyen@hotmail.com), Meeting Chair, and Meg Fritzsche (FritzscheM@si.edu), Meeting Secretariat. Please include contact information and a short statement concerning the responsibilities of the nominee in relation to biodiversity and their potential interest in barcoding.

Website for the Second International Barcode of Life Conference: www.dnabarcodes2007.org
CBOL website: www.barcoding.si.edu; For more information on BioNET: www.bionet-intl.org.