Geneva Pharma Forum
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Experiences with Bio-prospecting and Access & Benefit Sharing

Andrew Jenner
Director IP & Trade
INBio created 1989 as a private, non-profit public interest institution

Mission: to conserve biodiversity
  • (1966 – 1989 Estimated 28% Forrest Lost)

Collecting and Taxonomically identifying well over 500,000 wild land species

Clear ABS laws established
• Collaborative research agreement
• Merck agreed to up front fee for plant, insect and soil samples
• Merck also agreed to royalties on any drug developed from the samples
• Merck had exclusive right to evaluate 10,000 samples
• INBio was able to enter into other agreements but could only share Merck samples if given permission.
Result

- Monetary Benefits - $1 Million
- Technology transfer - equipment donation worth over $135,000
- Merck sent two natural product chemists to set up extractions labs and train scientists
- INBio scientists visited Merck’s labs
Lilly/INBio Collaboration Agreement

- Research Collaboration from 1999-2000
- Collection of extracts from plant samples by INBio
- Payment for each individual extract received, with possibility of milestones and royalties
- Technology transfer
  - Provided extraction procedure still in use today
  - Exchange of scientists
- Dispute resolution mechanism
Industry Examples

Cameroon & Lilly
A research scientist in Cameroon contacted Lilly to engage in a natural products collaboration (2007)

Lilly informed the scientist that transfer of genetic resource without authorization is a violation of Cameroon national law

Research scientist was unable to obtain authorization from relevant ministries

— Authorization forms were later found to be from the wrong ministry
— Lilly letter to CBD Focal Point in Cameroon to resolve the deficiencies
— After more than one year, Lilly closed its files on this potential collaboration

No collaboration therefore no access, no benefit-sharing, no technology transfer, no new medicines
Lessons Learnt

• Clear and useable ABS laws
• Single Point of Contact

• Creating the right environment for mutually beneficial collaboration
Thank you

For more information

Andrew Jenner
Director IP & Trade

A.Jenner@ifpma.org