

Dear Mr. Gowers,

Thank you for the invitation to provide evidence in the context of the independent review that you are carrying out on the United Kingdom's intellectual property framework. Please note that the issue of intellectual property rights has come up in discussions in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular with regard to the relationship between intellectual property rights on life forms, on the one hand, and article 15 of the CBD which recognizes the sovereign rights of States over their natural resources, on the other hand. Discussions in this regard are ongoing within the CBD Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, as well as within the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization.

We note your deadline of 21 April and will provide further details on this matter, which may be of interest to you, following the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, which is being held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006.

Best regards,

Olivier Jalbert  
Principal Officer