



# Evolution of NEPAD/African Biosciences Initiative and SANBio Hub/Node Working Arrangements



**NEPAD**  
A Programme of the African Union

The NEPAD/African Biosciences Initiative has gone through the design phase and has moved into implementation phase. The purpose of this document is to clarify the relationships among NEPAD, CSIR and SANBio. It is based on the provisions in the SANBio Business Plan 2006-2011.

#### NEPAD S&T Flagship programmes

- Biodiversity Science & Technology
- Biotechnology
- Indigenous Knowledge & Technology
- Water Sciences & Technology
- Material Sciences
- Science of Manufacturing
- Information and Communication Technology
- Desertification
- Post Harvest and Food Technology
- Laser Technology
- Space Science
- Energy Technologies
- Mathematical Sciences

#### Biosciences Initiative

- Biodiversity Science & Technology
- Biotechnology
- Indigenous Knowledge & Technology

### Part 1: Evolution of NEPAD/African Biosciences initiative

#### 1. Authorising environment and political legitimacy

The establishment of the NEPAD/African Biosciences Initiative arose out of recognition that:

- Developing countries and countries with economies in transition are unlikely to harness and wisely apply modern biotechnology if they do not invest in improving infrastructure for R&D. (UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development, Tehran 2000)
- Many developing countries are not able to secure adequate domestic financial and technical resources to construct and maintain state-of-the-art equipped laboratories (Prep-com for WSSD, Bali 2001)
- Establishing and networking existing centres of excellence in science and technology in general, and biosciences in particular, is the best way of mobilizing and building Africa's R&D and innovation capacities (NEPAD Framework Document 2001)
- There are economies of scale to exploit if several countries network and share their R&D infrastructure(s), and that under NEPAD, continental efforts are required to network large R&D facilities (Roundtable on Africa, Science and Technology in the Age of Globalisation, Nairobi August 2001)
- In order to enable/support African countries to achieve sustainable development, the international community should support the establishment of centres of excellence in science and technology, with emphasis on water, agriculture, health, energy and biodiversity (World Summit on Sustainable Development, Chapter 8 of Plan of Implementation, 2002 Johannesburg). The drafting of chapter 8 was led by NEPAD and the African group in general.

#### 2. Building SANBio—Clarity of Concept and Building African Ownership

The concept of SANBio, its mission and governance as well as its indicative projects are articulated in the SANBio Business Plan (April 2006). SANBio is a network of research and development facilities—comprising of a hub at the CSIR and nodes—that are available to African scientists and institutions for conducting scientific research. It is a cluster of shared facilities for Southern Africa.

The SANBio Network as one of the four centres of excellence in biosciences in Africa being established by NEPAD and its partners must be owned and led by Africans and their institutions. Indeed for NEPAD's ideals and SANBio's goals to be realised, Southern Africa cannot entirely rely on donors, building domestic ownership and investment in SANBio is the key challenge that the network has to confront.

### PART 2: CSIR/SANBio/NEPAD RELATIONSHIP

#### 1. Relationship between NEPAD Secretariat and SANBio

A NEPAD-ABI regional biosciences network consists of a secretariat, hub and several nodes distributed throughout the region.

The four NEPAD-ABI regional networks are:

- Biosciences eastern and central Africa Network (BecANet)
- Southern African Network for Biosciences (SANBio)
- West African Biosciences Network (WABNet)
- North African Biosciences Network (NABNet).

NEPAD is providing a platform on which these biosciences networks are being established. The networks belong to the countries of the regions while NEPAD/ABI provides policy guidelines.

- The SANBio Network has independent governance, with regional ownership and leadership provided by means of a SANBio Steering Committee, which is the autonomous governing body of the SANBio network, and reports to the member countries
- NEPAD, as a mediator of nations and stakeholders, shall assist SANBio in mobilising political and financial support and awareness creation about SANBio to policy and decision makers in African governments and with international partners
- The Steering Committee of SANBio will provide regular reports to NEPAD about the outputs and outcomes of its activities.

These provisions are as set out in the SANBio Business Plan.

#### 2. The relationship between SANBio and CSIR

- SANBio is a network that has a Secretariat responsible for coordinating network activities with the main focus being to get joint venture research going at the hub and nodes, using available facilities
- CSIR hosts the hub and secretariat for the network
- In addition to hub hosting, CSIR shall participate in network research and development activities
- As a host of the SANBio secretariat, CSIR provides administrative support, and serves as the legal persona of SANBio.

#### 3. Role and Responsibilities of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is responsible for coordinating the cooperative efforts of the members and participants of the SANBio Network and for encouraging and guiding the conduct of

activities at the SANBio Hub, Secretariat and Regional Nodes, including taking the actions set out below. It is also responsible for the governance and oversight of the SANBio Network. The Steering Committee has the power, inter alia, to:

- Appoint the SANBio Network Director
- Appoint the Senior Management Team
- Appoint the Technical Advisory Groups
- Oversee the Senior Management Team in the management, administration and furtherance of the mission and objectives of SANBio
- Approve the Business and Implementation Plans for the Network and the Annual Work Plan and Budget
- Oversee resource mobilisation and stewardship of SANBio Funds
- Mobilise resources and seek contributions in furtherance of the objectives of the Network
- Enter into agreements for the operations of the SANBio Hub and Secretariat, Regional Nodes and Projects, as appropriate
- Oversee periodic reviewing, monitoring and evaluation of the quality and relevance and overall operations of SANBio to ensure compliance with the set benchmarks and objectives
- Ensure an appropriate balance and synergy amongst the research projects and other activities
- Establish procedures and guidelines for the admission of new members of the SANBio Network
- As appropriate, delegate powers to the Network Director either generally or with respect to specific matters.

#### **4. SANBio network Director is answerable to the Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee shall select and appoint the Network Director.

- The Network Director is accountable to the Steering Committee for carrying out his/her duties, which shall be specified by the Steering Committee
- The Steering Committee shall approve an annual work plan for the Network Director, as part of the annual work plan and budget for the Network, which shall be consistent with the current Business Plan and Implementation Plan, as prepared by the Network Director and approved by the Steering Committee.

Role of the Network Director is to:

- Provide leadership to all components of the SANBio Network
- Provide day to day management of the Secretariat
- Liaise with Members and inform them on progress in activities
- Enter into SANBio Project Agreements with participants for the conduct of activities
- Ensure that SANBio resources are used in accordance with the annual budget and work plan and any directions of the Steering Committee

- Monitor and keep the Steering Committee and Members informed of activities
- Prepare reports required by Contributors and partners, in conjunction with the hub or node hosting institution, where hub or node has responsibilities under contractual arrangements with Contributors and partners
- Prepare draft annual budgets and work plans and submit them to the Steering Committee for approval
- Identify new research opportunities
- Authorise public statements about SANBio
- Inform NEPAD on progress in activities
- Identify opportunities to establish links with and coordinate activities with other bioscience 'centres of excellence', networks, and programs, including those sponsored by NEPAD in other regions in Africa
- Promote and raise awareness on the SANBio Network
- Carry out any other duties as delegated or requested by the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee is responsible for evaluation of the Network Director. It shall agree on performance evaluation criteria and the process for annual evaluation of the Network Director.

#### **5. Finances of SANBio shall be distinguished between:**

- Funds designated for operations at the SANBio hub shall be administered by CSIR, who will report on expenditure and development of works to the Steering Committee
- Funds that are designated to be used at the nodes based on approved programmes shall be administered by the nodes, which will report to the Steering Committee
- Funds designated for running the secretariat and facilitating network activities at the nodes that relate to joint venture research shall be administered by the SANBio Network Director, who will also accordingly report to the Steering Committee
- The Network Director will coordinate all documentation from the hub and nodes to the Steering Committee
- All funds administered through CSIR shall be used in accordance with CSIR financial regulations, and this constitutes one of the administrative supports provided by CSIR to the SANBio Secretariat
- As the sources of funding for SANBio broadens, nodes will also provide legal and administrative support to the secretariat to accommodate scenarios where some partners or governments may want to have their support administered through node hosting institution.

#### **6. Administrative support provided by CSIR to SANBio Secretariat**

CSIR shall provide to the SANBio Secretariat support services including recruitment of staff on behalf of the Steering Committee, procurement of goods and services, and preparing assessments and reports to contributors and donors.

## 7. Institutional Assets

- 7.1 Unless otherwise agreed in writing, a Member retains legal ownership of any Asset that:
- It provides as part of a Contribution; or
  - It acquires in whole or in part utilising Funds allocated to the Member as a Participant under a SANBio Project Agreement.
- 7.2 During the period in which a Member is a Member of the SANBio Network, Member must:
- Make the Asset available for the Activities
  - Insure, maintain and pay any other costs or liabilities associated with the Asset.

## 8. Audit

In order to streamline audit procedures, the Steering Committee and CSIR or node hosting institution will agree on audit procedures for SANBio Activities.

## PART 3: HUB/NODES/SANBio RELATIONSHIP

### 1. Relationship between Hub and Nodes

The SANBio Steering committee has specified the roles and responsibilities of the Hubs and Nodes as summarised in Table 1.

### 2. Regional Status of the Nodes

The Nodes shall be national institutions identified by respective member countries to serve regional needs within a particular thematic area. The above notwithstanding, and in view of the regional status and functions of the node, the node shall be run by the Regional Node Steering Committee (RNSC) which shall be assembled in consultative process by the National Focal Point (NFP) the Technical coordinator. The National Focal Point shall be Chairperson of the RNSC Steering Committee and shall be the link person between the SANBio Steering Committee and RNSC while the Technical Coordinator shall serve as secretariat to the RNSC and coordinate network activities in the particular thematic area.

### 3. Role and responsibilities of the Regional Node Steering Committee

The RNSC shall:

- Ensure a balanced approach to programmes in the thematic area to cater for the regional needs
- Oversee resource mobilization and stewardship of SANBio Regional Node funds
- Mobilise resources and seek contributions from Node hosting and participating countries in furtherance of the objectives of SANBio and the network in the area of specialisation
- Ensure and appropriate balance and synergy amongst research projects and other Activities
- Hold regular meetings at least times per year. Before each meeting an agenda will be prepared and distributed by the Technical Coordinator to all members on the RNSC setting out the proposals, plans and decisions to be taken
- Through the Chairperson of the National Focal Point, report to SANBio Steering Committee on the progress of SANBio activities relating to the Node.

**Table 1. Summary of roles and responsibilities for the Hub and Nodes in the SANBio Network.**

HUB	NODES
1. Hosts the hub and secretariat for the network. As a host of the Secretariat, the hub provides administrative support, and serves as the legal persona of SANBio.	Provide a particular strength, e.g., capacity/competency in a technology.
2. In addition to hosting the hub, CSIR shall participate in network research and development activities under mutually agreed terms and guidelines.	Provide an operational focal point outside the hub to service other members of the network.
3. Equipment to be made available by the CSIR at the SANBio hub for conduct of research under mutually agreed terms and guidelines.	Share equipment that is available at the node with other institutions under mutually agreed terms guidelines.
4. To act as a central focal point for integration of R&D expertise and facilities across the region to achieve synergy and cooperation in biosciences in the development of the of the regional network.	Nodes to help identify flagship projects based on the thematic areas for implementation. The projects should conform to the criteria that are spelt out in the SANBio Business Plan, i.e., the projects should address regional problems, therefore bringing together consortia of scientists in the different countries.
5. Involved in a vigorous programme of capacity development. In a number of countries in the region the expertise is severely limited and this will not only offer an opportunity to correct the deficiency but also ensure a greater potential for all the countries to participate in projects.	Establish institutional task forces that will be proactive in preparing concept notes and proposals for SANBio.
6. The hub should work closely with the nodes in preparing concept nodes and proposals for resource mobilisation.	The level of sensitisation for R & D is not the same at all the nodes. Therefore nodes should conduct sensitisation activities to help hub and nodes move forward.
7. Hub will develop a close scientific cooperation with other networks and hubs.	Nodes will develop a close scientific cooperation with other institutions in the network and the hub.

### 4. Selection of the Technical Coordinator

The National Focal Point in consultation with the hosting institution shall select the Technical Coordinator for the node. It is expected that the Technical Coordinator will be somebody who is accepted by their host institution and the country and the National Focal Point will inform SANBio Secretariat about the candidate and will also submit the CV. SANBio Steering Committee has a right to accept or reject the candidate with regard to the area that the country has submitted the bid for.

### 5. Profile of the Technical coordinator

The Technical Coordinator shall be someone who has:

- Knowledge of new and advanced bioscience applications in the thematic area which the country is coordinating

- Skills and experience in strategic planning and implementation
- Experience in initiating and developing networks/collaborations with a range of stakeholders within a complex multidisciplinary and multicultural setting
- Excellent communication, writing, presentation and networking skills and proven ability to influence and engage a wide range of stakeholders
- Experience in developing proposals, negotiating and securing support from investors
- Experience in research management in biological sciences.

#### **6. Terms of Reference for the Technical Coordinator**

The Technical Coordinator shall:

- Manage, administer and further the vision, mission and objectives of SANBio as relates to the thematic area
- Work closely with the SANBio Network Director in the development and implementation of research programmes as well the monitoring and evaluation
- Work with Network Director to fund raise in order to secure adequate and stable sources of financing so that the regional network as an organization becomes self-sustaining financially
- Prepare and submit to the network Director and RCSC a biannual and a yearly comprehensive action plan, and financial budget, as well as a yearly progress reports of activities as well as audited financial statements.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with relevant government ministries, private sector, NGOs as well as other stakeholders
- Facilitate establishment of national subnodes and each subnode shall be expected to establish a national steering committee in each participating country where capacity exists, where it does not, assist in capacity building. The NSC shall carry out run activities of the country as related to the thematic area. Normally the Technical Coordinator in the host country will be the Secretary of the national Steering committee
- Liaise and inform the chairman of the RNSC activities done at the node for him/her to be able to report to appropriate national and regional structures
- Liaise with the NFP as chairman of the RNSC on day to day management of the Node.

#### **7. Tenure of Nodal Status**

After every five years, the SANBio Steering Committee shall review the performance of each Node as a Centre of Excellency in the particular thematic area with respect to its ability to serve the region.

#### **8. Finances of SANBio shall be distinguished between:**

- Funds designated for operations at SANBio Nodes shall be administered by the Nodes, who will report on expenditure and development of works to the Steering Committee through the Network Director
- Funds designated for running the secretariat and facilitating network activities at the nodes that relate to joint venture research shall be administered by the SANBio Network Director, who will also accordingly report to the Steering Committee

- The Network Director will coordinate all documentation from the hub and nodes to the Steering Committee
- All funds administered through Nodes shall be used in accordance with Nodes' financial regulations, and this constitutes one of the administrative supports provided by the Nodes to the SANBio Secretariat
- As the sources of funding for SANBio broadens, nodes will also provide legal and administrative support to the secretariat to accommodate scenarios where some partners or governments may want to have their support administered through node hosting institution.

#### **9. Administrative support provided by Nodes to SANBio Secretariat**

Nodes shall provide to the SANBio Secretariat support services including recruitment of staff on behalf of the Steering Committee, procurement of goods and services, and preparing assessments and reports to contributors and donors.

#### **10. Institutional Assets**

- 10.1 Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the host institution retains legal ownership of any Asset that:
- It provides as part of a Contribution; or
  - It acquires in whole or in part utilizing Funds allocated to the Node as a Participant under a SANBio Project Agreement.
- 10.2 During the period in which a Node is a Member of the SANBio Network, the Node shall:
- Make the Asset available for the SANBio activities
  - Insure, maintain and pay any other costs or liabilities associated with the Assets.

#### **11. Audit**

In order to streamline audit procedures, the Steering Committee and hub or node hosting institution shall agree on audit procedures for SANBio Activities.

---

#### **Contact for additional information**

Prof. Luke E. Mumba, PhD  
SANBio Network Director

CSIR Building, 20 Meiring Naude Road  
P.O. Box 395, Lynnwood, Pretoria,  
0001, South Africa

Tel: +27128413903/4

Fax: +27128413906

Email: [lmumba@sanbio.co.za](mailto:lmumba@sanbio.co.za)

Website: [www.nepadst.org/sanbio](http://www.nepadst.org/sanbio)