CropLife International Supports Outcome of Convention on
Biological Diversity and Cartagena Biosafety Protocol Discussions

 *Industry Engagement with Parties Contributes to Productive Negotiations Which Protect International Trade, Genetic Resources and Biodiversity*

Cancun, Mexico—18 Dec. 2016—CropLife International and the Global Industry Coalition (GIC) applaud the productive negotiations that took place at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD) meetings in Cancun, Mexico, this month, including the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-13), the Eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP/MOP-8), and the Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (COP-MOP-2).

The plant science industry participated in the COP/MOP-8 negotiations and implementation discussions through the GIC, which commended the Parties’ hard work to advance discussions on a number of Articles of the BSP including environmental risk assessment, unintentional transboundary movements, and the role of socio-economic considerations in decision-making. Progress made during these negotiations will help ensure that the transboundary movement of living modified organisms (LMOs) continues to protect biological diversity, while maintaining uninterrupted international trade and ensuring farmers have access to sustainable agricultural innovations.

The GIC delegation, which attended this year’s UN CBD meetings, was comprised of over 40 individuals representing 15 countries from all agricultural regions of the world.

“Over the last decade, the Global Industry Coalition has come to be known as a strong and valued resource on BSP-related issues to Parties,” said Sarah Lukie, Secretariat of the Global Industry Coalition. “The plant biotechnology industry has a long history of supporting Parties and delegates as they implement the Protocol in a way that enables uninterrupted global trade and the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, which conserve natural resources and protect biodiversity. The Parties should be particularly commended for the strong outcomes made on environmental risk assessment at COP/MOP-8. The GIC welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with its partners in the International Grain Trade Coalition to help the Parties negotiate environmental risk assessment, as well as make positive progress on key issues related to the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol.”

During this month’s UN CBD meetings, industry also participated in and contributed to initial discussions on various aspects related to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, which came into force in 2014. The plant biotechnology industry commends the Parties in continuing its dialogue on several issues that could have a significant impact on innovation.

“The plant biotechnology industry is pleased to participate in the nascent discussions around the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and looks forward to contributing to these discussions as they evolve in the coming years,” said Dominic Muyldermans, CropLife International representative for access and benefit sharing. “Together with the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Seed Federation, CropLife International hopes to strengthen its existing relationships with Parties and delegates to safeguard sustainable use of genetic resources.”

Today, biotech crops are grown on more than 179 million hectares in 28 countries, including several major agricultural exporting countries. Guidelines on the import, transfer, handling, and domestic use of living modified organisms, including how to address damage to biological diversity, can have a significant impact on international trade. In addition, rules on access and benefit sharing need to provide legal certainty and be workable in order to safeguard the sustainable use of genetic resources and effective sharing of benefits. CropLife International and members of the GIC and plant biotech industry look forward to participating in the intersessional meetings scheduled by the Parties to occur before they meet again for their ninth meeting in Egypt in 2018.

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Note to Editor:

CropLife International is the voice of the global plant science industry. It champions the role of agricultural innovations in crop protection and plant biotechnology in supporting and advancing sustainable agriculture; helping farmers feed a growing population while looking after the planet; and progressing rural communities. The world needs farmers, and farmers need plant science. CropLife International is proud to be at the heart of helping farmers grow.

The GIC receives input and direction from trade associations representing thousands of companies from all over the world, as well as coordinates closely with other like-minded coalitions, such as the International Grain Trade Coalition. Participants include associations representing, and companies engaged in, a variety of industrial sectors such as plant science, seed, agricultural biotechnology, food production, animal agriculture, human and animal health care, and the environment.