



Leibniz Institute
DSMZ-German Collection
of Microorganisms
and Cell Cultures GmbH



home of more than 84,000 biological resources

What about my research project?

When conducting research, every scientist has the obligation to figure out which (inter-)national laws apply to the biological resource that is used for the experiments. To fulfil the obligations under the Nagoya Protocol, it is essential to check the ABS Clearing House and contact the National Focal Point and/or Competent National Authority listed there. These authorities must be informed about the intended research project and will provide support in obtaining all necessary permits and approvals.

In order to draft appropriate documents with the provider country (PIC, MAT, MTA and IRCC), researchers must reveal the anticipated short- and long-term use of the biological resource.

If the research receives private or public funding, a due diligence declaration shall be submitted to the Competent Authority of the country of the scientist after the research project has started. The requested information are listed in the EU regulation 2015/1866.

Not submitting the due diligence declaration is a minor breach of the law and is prosecuted according to national law.

More information about the due diligence declaration can be found on the DSMZ website.

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DSMZ- REGISTERED COLLECTION





Leibniz Institute DSMZ GmbH

The Leibniz Institute DSMZ-German Collection of Microorganisms and Cell Cultures was founded in 1969 and is one of the largest biological resource centres worldwide, offering the most diverse collection of over 84,000 biological resources with more than 30,000 different types of bacteria and fungi, bacteriophages, human and animal cell lines, plant viruses, antisera and protists. The preservation and supply of living biodiversity with a high level of quality control is one of the main tasks of the DSMZ.

Apart from the collection, the DSMZ offers extensive scientific services and also has a large research department.

Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol is a binding treaty under international law, defining the implementation of the UN convention on biological diversity (CBD). The Nagoya Protocol entered into force October 12, 2014 and is based on the principle that each country has the sovereign rights of its biological resources (animals and parts thereof, microorganisms or even DNA). Human samples are excluded from this regulation.

Researchers must obtain specific legal compliant documents in order to collect, export and use biological resources.

A biological resource is Nagoya-relevant when the country of origin had already ratified the Nagoya Protocol at the time of sampling. An actual overview of the relevant countries is provided by the ABS Clearing House.

Registered Collection

The DSMZ was the first biological resource centre ever to be entered in the European register of collections (register code 01-DE-2018). This means that the DSMZ officially meets the requirements of the Nagoya Protocol by taking care of two essential tasks for customers:

1. reviewing whether a biological resource falls within the scope of the Nagoya Protocol, and
2. checking if all required documents and approvals are on hand.

The DSMZ has checked all its biological resources listed in the public catalogue and has determined whether they are Nagoya-relevant. If this is the case, all necessary documents are available for download. These documents comprise e.g. the permission to access the resource (Prior Informed Consent, PIC), the Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) or the Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance (IRCC). In some cases a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) accompanies the biological resource.

As a Registered Collection it is the task of the DSMZ, together with the depositor of a biological resource, to identify and legally check all necessary permissions and documents – a work load that is normally on the researcher who orders and intends to use the resource.

A biological resource obtained from the DSMZ can therefore be used in a legally compliant way directly after purchasing it.

Nevertheless, users of a biological resource still have to follow the due diligence requirements, i.e. they have to abide by the conditions stated in the official documents accompanying the resource. In addition, all documents have to be stored at least 20 years after the last utilisation of the resource.

Deposit of resources

In order to deposit biological resources, all relevant documents (e.g. PIC, MAT) must be at hand. This is facilitated by our website which guides scientists online through the process of deposit.

It is essential that the documentation clearly states that newly obtained microorganisms were collected legally, can be deposited in the public collection and can be distributed to users of the DSMZ. For many provider countries it is helpful to communicate to them that the DSMZ has a binding MTA of its own that restricts usage of a DSMZ strain to non-commercial research use only and prohibits subsequent distribution of the strains to third parties.

The DSMZ does NOT accept any deposits for which the provider country demands that permission has to be obtained from the provider country for each individual future dispatch of a strain.

A restricted distribution of strains does not comply with the International Code of Nomenclature for Bacteria (Rule 30), which states that strains must be available “without restrictions” in order to fulfil the standards of Good Scientific Practice.