



9 Homestead Road
Lyah
Via Home Hill Qld 4806
28 February 2001

The Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services
House of Representatives
Canberra A.C.T.2600

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: Inquiry into development of high technology industries in regional Australia based on Bio-prospecting.

Please refer to the Joint NGO statement on the review of Article 27.3 (b) of the WTO TRIPS agreement – Review of TRIPS (Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights).

I submit that Article 27.3(b) be amended to clarify that life forms and living processes cannot be patented. Granting of patents on plant life is a distortion of the patent law system which was originally intended to protect mechanical inventions and not to allow corporations and individuals private rights and ownership over biological and genetic resources, traditional knowledge and genetically modified organisms, in order to obtain monopoly profits.

Anti-competitive rights or practices which may threaten food sovereignty of developing countries must be prevented. Traditional farming practices, including the right to save and exchange seeds must be preserved.

The implementation date of Article 27.3(b) should be extended until five years after the completion of the substantive review of this Article.

Yours faithfully

S.M. Betteridge
Elcanor M. Betteridge (Mrs)