Access and Benefit-Sharing Guidebook:

Using Genetic Resources from your home country

or other foreign countries in Japan

ver. 1.1

ABS Support Team for Academia
National Institute of Genetics

Contents

The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing

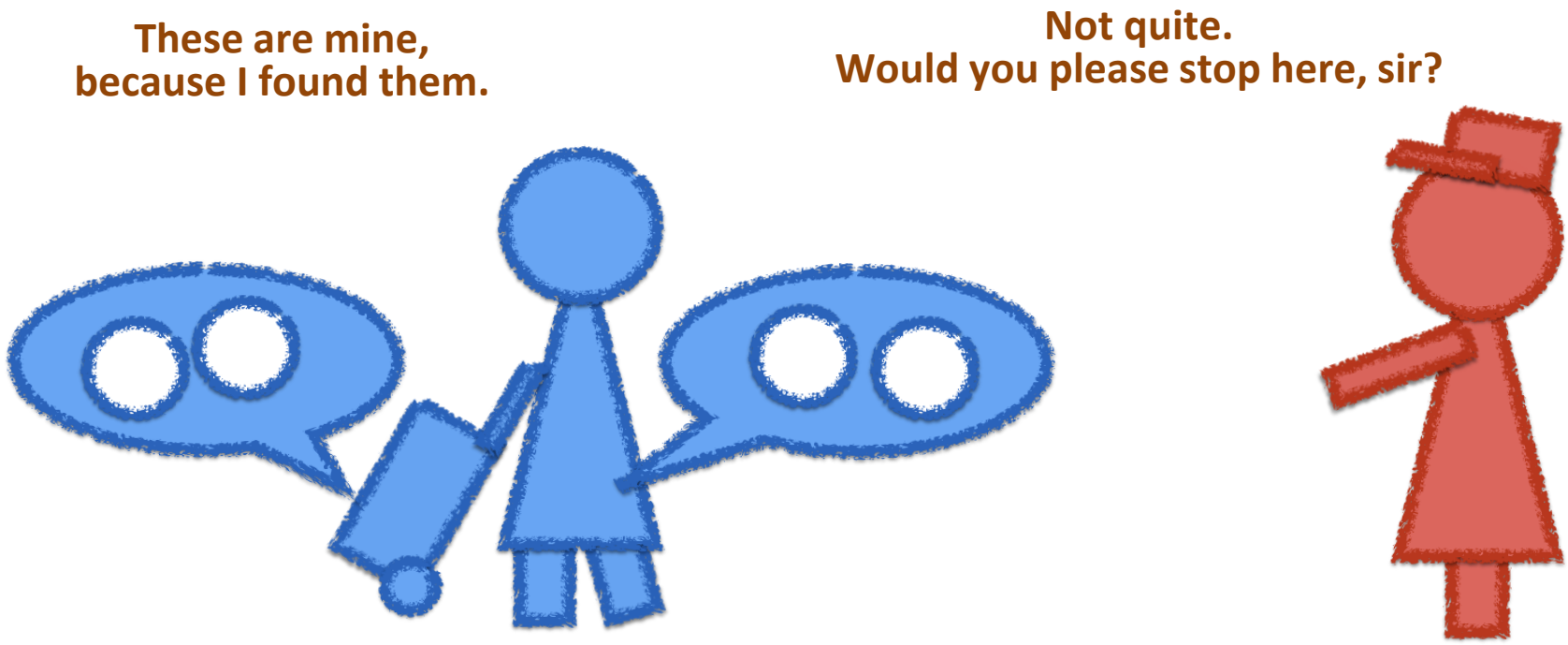
Does it affect me?

→Yes, it does!

If you wish to study in Japan using genetic resources (GRs) from your country or others, you must comply with the rules for Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) specified in the Nagoya Protocol (NP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in addition to the laws and regulations in the countries providing the GRs (herein referred to as “providing countries”).

Before obtaining GRs from overseas or bringing them into Japan – **even from your own country** – you must confirm and comply with all relevant rules and procedures established by the laws in the providing country.

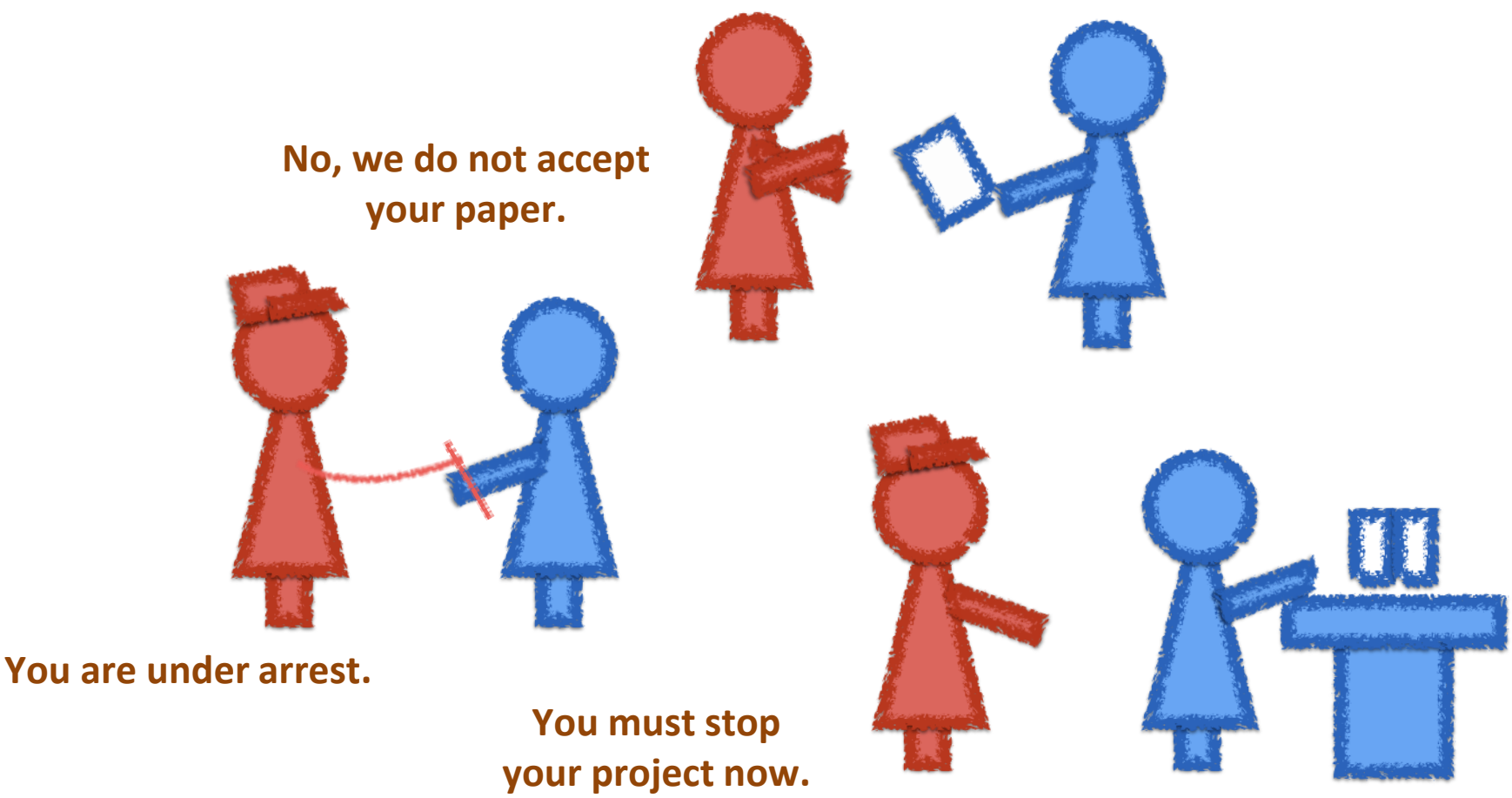
If you bring GRs into Japan without following the proper procedures, you risk facing severe penalties.



Failure to comply with the laws and regulations in the providing country (**even if it is your home country**) could result in the following penalties.

1) You may be arrested in the GR providing country.
2) Your research may be suspended or interrupted.
3) Your application for grants may not be accepted.
4) Your paper may be rejected by journals.
5) Your results may not be publicly presented.
6) You and your host institute may not be able to access samples from the providing country in the future.
7) You cannot apply for patents using the samples.
8) These may seriously affect for your Ph.D. degree.

You risk **serious consequences** to your research, your PhD degree as well as to other researchers in your host county if you fail to follow proper ABS procedures.



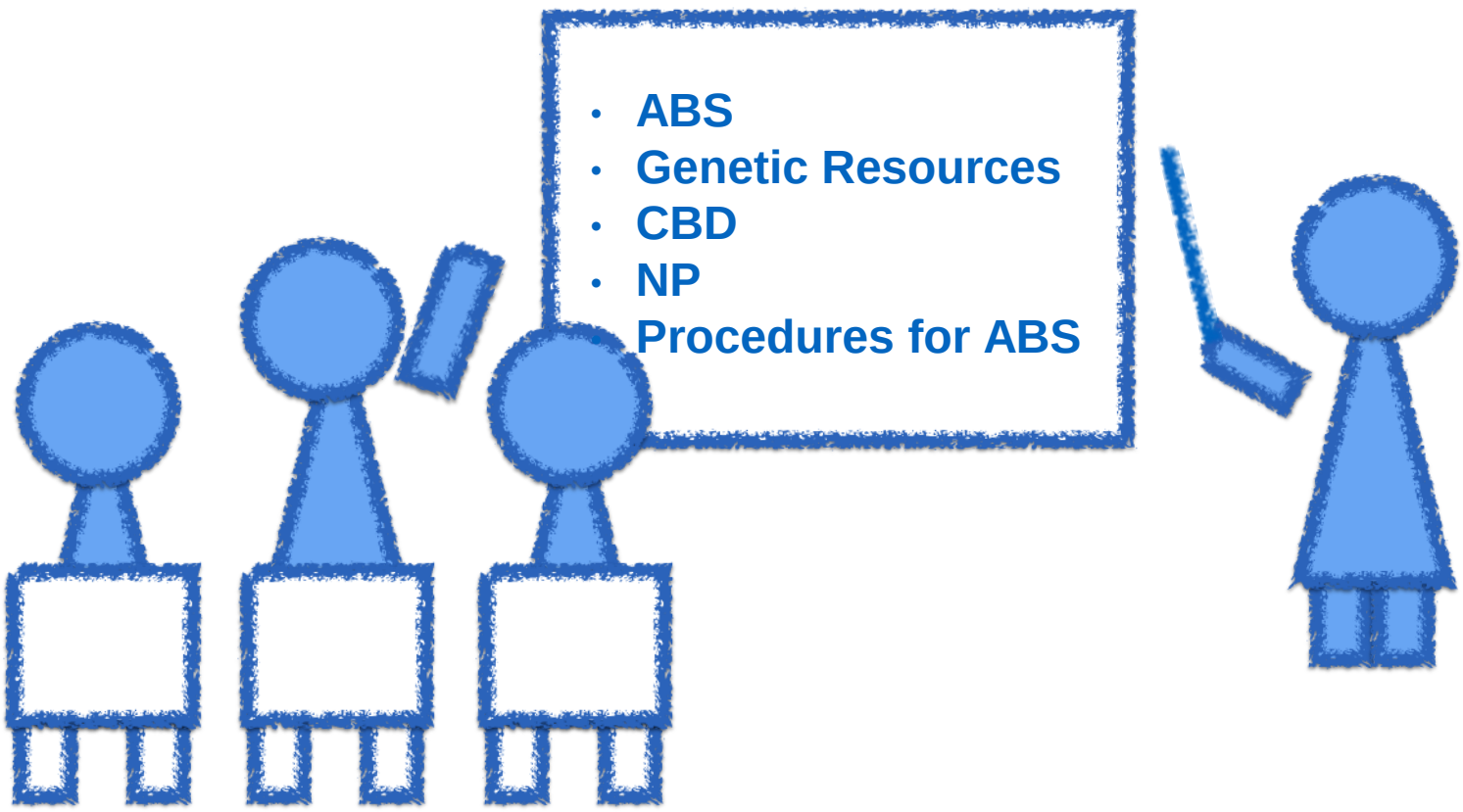
What can I do to avoid such penalties?

Although it is enough to observe the relevant laws and ABS procedures in the providing country for obtaining and transporting GRs, the reality is more complicated because such laws and procedures are different depending on the country, the GR species, and the planned use of the GR.

Indeed it's quite complicated! So where do we start?

Read this booklet to familiarize yourself with the basics of ABS.

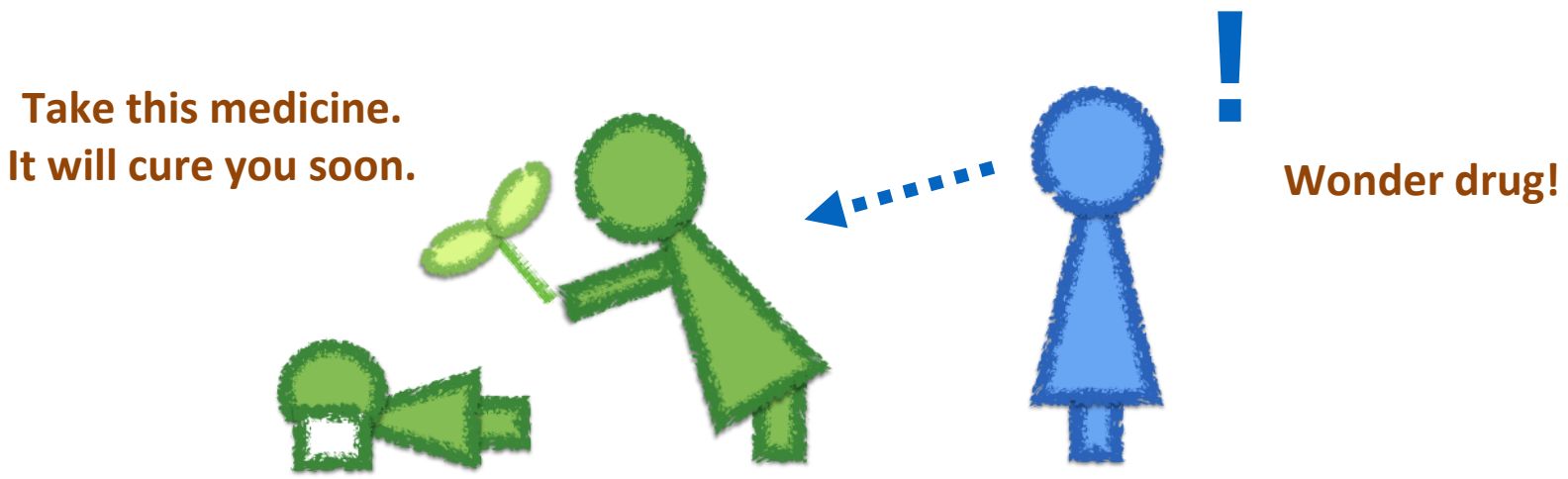
First of all, what is "ABS"? What kind of sample organisms – GRs – are affected? What are ABS Guidelines, and what are the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol (NP) which are the basis for these guidelines? What procedures are required to obtain GRs from overseas? Read through the following pages to find out.



What is ABS?

Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization – or "Access and Benefit-Sharing" for short.

Since ancient times, people have used natural remedies sourced from herbs and other living organisms to treat illness and promote human health. Modern developments in scientific research have further revealed the potential benefits offered by living organisms, and as a result they are receiving renewed attention.



Consequently, scientists and companies around the world are competing to acquire potentially valuable GRs (see page 6) such as unexplored organisms and their genes. This is especially prevalent in regions where research is not advanced (e.g. developing countries), and the inappropriate or unapproved collection and removal of GRs from such countries has become a serious problem.

This issue has led to an international movement with the following three goals:

1) To ensure that GRs are not transferred internationally without **permission**.
2) To **share the benefits** obtained from GRs between providing countries and user countries (where the research takes place).
3) To apply the benefits of GRs for **biodiversity conservation**.

As a result, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (see page 8) was established to define the rules for accessing genetic resources and for sharing benefits between the providing and user counties. The official wording for this is “access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization”, which is commonly shortened to “**A**ccess and **B**enefit-**S**haring” or simply “**ABS**”.

What is a genetic resource (GR)?

What exactly are the “genetic resources” that are covered by the rules for Access and Benefit-Sharing? According to the CBD (see page 8) a genetic resource is defined as "genetic material of actual or potential value”, and "genetic material" is defined as “any material of plant, animal, microbial or other origin containing functional units of heredity.”

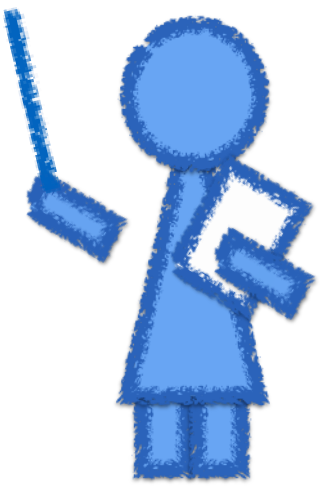
Although the concept of “value” may be a subjective one, we cannot say that anything is “without value” as a research subject. Therefore we ought to consider any material as having “value”.

When using GRs from overseas (**including your own country**) you must comply with proper ABS rules and procedures (see page 10). Failure to comply with the providing country’s laws for obtaining and using GRs **risks serious implications** not only for your own research, but for the scientific community in Japan as a whole.

Examples of GR samples for which the rules for ABS from the CBD do and do not apply are given on the next page.

Samples covered by CBD/ABS

- Whole or partial organisms: plants, animals, and microbes (including viruses, phages, viroids, etc.) regardless of condition (i.e. dead, living, dried, frozen, powdered, etc.)
- Microorganisms in environmental samples (soil, water)
- Traditional knowledge associated with GRs (for example, recipes and applications of medicinal herbs)



NOTE:

- DNA/RNA purified from organisms are subject to ABS. ABS procedures must be followed when using DNA/RNA samples obtained from overseas.
- Organic compounds or derivatives that do not contain functional units of heredity such as proteins and metabolites are not categorized as genetic resources by the CBD/NP. However, special care is needed as some countries do regard these as subject to ABS rules in their national laws. (See page 17, FAQ #8)

Samples (usually) NOT covered by CBD/ABS

- Sequence Data (Digital Sequence Information)

  (Caution: Some countries' laws do include sequence data as subject to ABS, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, and others.)
- Synthesized nucleotides (DNA/RNA)
- Marine organisms from international waters

  (For more details see http://idenshigen.jp)
- Human GRs

  (Caution: China has implemented strict regulations on human GRs.)

  (Intestinal microbes, parasites and infectious organisms are subject to ABS.)
- GRs from CBD non-signatory countries

  (Notably the USA is a non-party of the CBD, and therefore GRs from the USA are not subject to ABS. However, the USA has its own laws and procedures regulating GRs. For more information on the USA and other non-party countries see page 16, FAQs #1 and #2)
- GRs obtained before the CBD entered into force (December 29, 1993)

  (See pages16 and 17, FAQs #4 and #7)

What is the Convention on Biological Diversity?

The CBD is an international treaty for the protection of the global ecosystem and biodiversity. Its three main goals are:

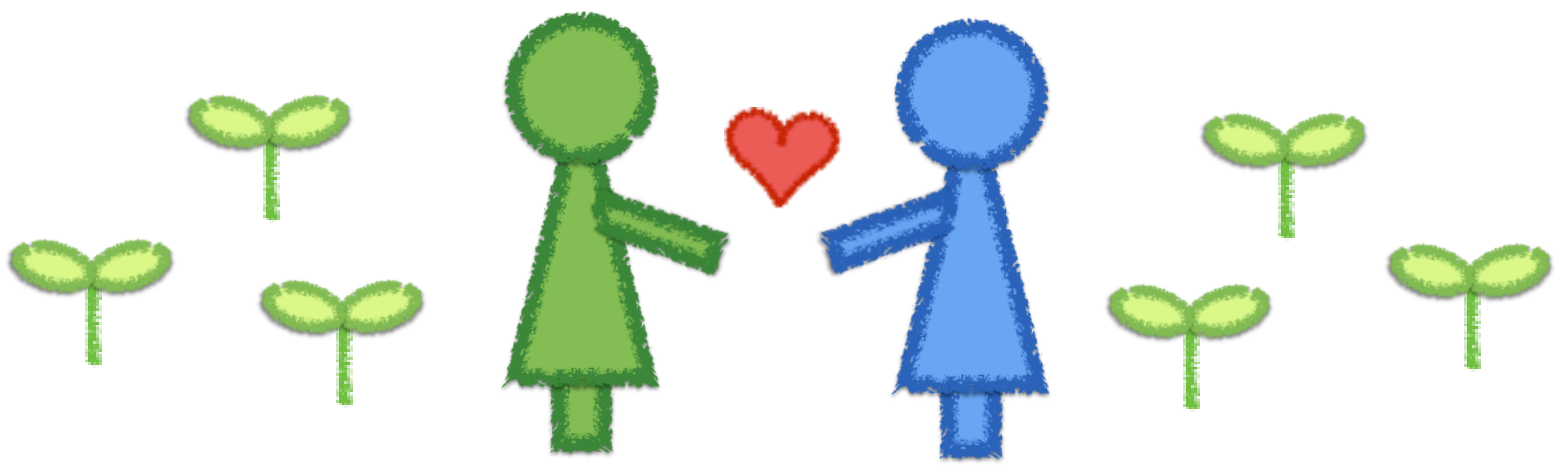
(1) The conservation of biodiversity
(2) The sustainable use of biodiversity
(3) The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of GRs

Article 15 of the CBD recognizes “the sovereign rights of States over their natural resources” and stipulates that “the authority to determine access to genetic resources” belongs to each country’s government and is subject to that country’s laws. The determination of “access” mentioned in Article 15 together with the CBD’s main goal (3) of “benefit-sharing” provides the commonly used abbreviation of “**A**ccess and **B**enefits-**S**haring” – or **ABS**.

Basic rules for GRs determined by ABS are as follows:

- Each country holds sovereign rights to their GRs.
- To utilize GRs, you need permission from the providing country.
- Benefits must be shared by user and provider countries.

ABS is a pivotal objective of the CBD. The Nagoya Protocol (NP) is a supplementary agreement to the CDB for implementing ABS.



Does basic research have “benefits” to share?

Researchers might mistakenly believe that NP rules for sharing benefits with provider countries do not apply to basic research, because no “monetary” benefit is gained. However, the assumption that “benefits” are necessarily monetary is incorrect.

Basic research IS subject to ABS!

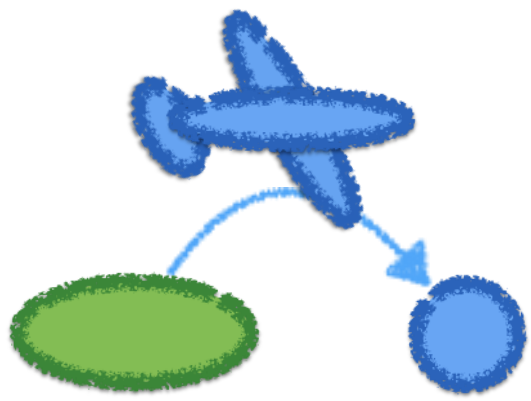
Basic research produces “non-monetary” benefits, which must be shared between provider and user countries, such as publication of co-authored paper, transfer of technology, capacity building and offering of educational opportunities. (See also pages 12, and 18)

ABS ensures that the use of foreign GRs promotes scientific advancement not only through research in user countries but also provides non-monetary benefits that promote scientific and educational advancement in the providing country and contribute to regional development. (See page 18)

Co-authorship

Collaboration

Teaching



Invitation

Standard procedures for ABS

On this page we introduce the “standard” procedures for accessing and importing foreign GRs into Japan in accordance with the CBD/NP. We use the term “standard” here because procedures vary according to the providing countries’ laws. Therefore the procedures for each providing country may also be significantly different.

Some countries may even have simplified procedures for GR access for students or scientists who are citizens of that country. For details, contact the ABS Support Team for Academia (abs@nig.ac.jp). Please familiarize yourself with the standard procedures below to gain a basic understanding of ABS and related issues.

Note: when bringing GRs from your country “providing country” means **your home country**!

① In conjunction with your principal investigator, find a collaborating researcher in the GR providing country and conduct joint research with this “counterpart” (see page 12 item 2). To do this, a collaborative agreement (*1) must first be established between your research institute in Japan and the providing country counterpart’s institute such as a MoU/MoA/CRA (see page 12, item 3). Note that the agreement must include **Mutually Agreed Terms** (**MAT***2) describing the sharing of benefits arising from the research (i.e. co-authorship of papers, transferring of experimental technology, etc.).

② Acquire **Prior Informed Consent** (**PIC** *3) from the government of the providing country in accordance with that country’s laws. Note that PIC is a combination of permits (access, transfer, research, etc.) required for your research (depending on your research plan). (See page 13, item 4)

③ Establish a **Material Transfer Agreement** (**MTA***4) between both institutes prior to transferring any GRs from the providing country to Japan. (Please observe any laws and procedures for quarantine, import/export, etc. in both countries.)

Additional procedures, when an Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance (IRCC*5) is issued from the ABS Clearing-House (ABSCH*6):
(The procedures below need to be taken only when an IRCC has been issued.)

❹ If the government of the providing country submits documents (PIC/MAT) proving your lawful access to GRs to the **ABS Clearing-House** (**ABSCH***6),

❺ An **Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance** (**IRCC***5) will be issued and made public on the ABSCH website.

⑥ Report to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) of Japan that you have acquired the IRCC. (The report will be posted on the website of the MOE.)

⑦ Five years after the first report, submit a follow-up monitoring report in accordance with the MOE’s instructions.

(Numbers with white backgrounds (①, ②, ③, ⑥ and ⑦) are procedures to be performed jointly by you and your institute, while those with black backgrounds (❹ and ❺) indicate procedures to be performed by the government of a GR providing country and ABSCH.)

ABS Clearing-House*6

(International information center for ABS)

https://absch.cbd.int

5 IRCC *5 published on the ABSCH web site.

4 Reports PIC/MAT certifying your lawful access to GRs

Sharing of Information

Providing country

Japan

- GRs
- Traditional Knowledge associated with GRs

Government of the providing country (CNA)

2 PIC (*3)

1 Joint research agreement (*1) with MAT (*2)

Counterpart's institute in providing/home country

Your present institute

3 MTA*4

Ministry of Environment

Web site for ABS

6 Report of issued IRCC *5

7 Request Monitoring

3 Sample Transfer

Your Present Institute

Basic Research

*1 Collaborative agreement: MoU/MoA (Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement), CRA (Collaborative Research Agreement), or similar contract. Use any agreement appropriate for your research.

*2 MAT (Mutually Agreed Terms) should contain benefit-sharing, conditions of sampling/transfer/usage, etc.

*3 PIC (Prior Informed Consent), is permission given by the Competent National Authority (CNA) of a providing country to applicants who wish to access GRs.

*4 MTA (Material Transfer Agreement) is a document or contract to transfer experimental materials (GRs).

*5 IRCC (Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance)

*6 ABSCH (The ABS Clearing-House) is an international platform for exchanging ABS information.

Considerations for ABS procedures

1. Check for relevant information on the ABSCH

The ABS Clearing-House (ABSCH) is an online virtual center for the world-wide exchange of ABS-related information, including the status of party members of the Nagoya Protocol, the office in each country to provide ABS information (National Focal Point – NFP), and the governmental body in charge (Competent National Authorities – CNA). Whenever you plan to obtain or use GRs, we recommend that you first visit the ABSCH website and confirm any relevant information. (https://absch.cbd.int) After the proper procedures have been followed, the providing country should report the approval of GR access to the ABSCH. The ABSCH will then issue an Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance (IRCC) and publish it on their website.

2. Have a counterpart in the providing country

As a first step whenever obtaining GRs from overseas, we strongly recommend conducting joint research with a collaborating researcher in the GR providing country. Having a local connection in the providing country can be beneficial for numerous reasons including facilitating negotiations and procedures with the CNA. If bringing a GR from your home country, a counterpart in your previous institute is a convenient option.

3. Specify Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) in the joint research agreement

Please establish a joint research agreement between your current institute and your counterpart's institute when conducting joint research. The agreement should explicitly describe the mutually agreed terms (MAT) including conditions of acquisition (amount, region, period, purpose, etc.); conditions of transfer (feasibility of transfer to third parties, necessity of agreement from providers, etc.); conditions of use (feasibility of reuse, additional contracts for commercial use, etc.); sharing of benefits (both monetary and non-monetary benefits); assignment of roles (role sharing in the research, negotiation with the CNA, etc.); and others (how to share results, registration to databases, etc.).

In the case of basic research, it's very important that non-monetary benefits be shared between user and providing country. Non-monetary benefits include publication of co-authored papers; technology transfer; symposiums, lectures or courses; the provision of equipment and documents for experiments; the visiting/inviting of researchers, etc. (See also pages 9 and 18)

4. Obtain permits to export and study GRs

Even for GRs you studied in your own county, you need an **export permit** from the providing country to bring a GR out of that country. Numerous additional procedures and permits are necessary when obtaining GRs from national parks and protected areas. It is important to have a counterpart in the providing country, and we strongly recommend a collaboration between present and previous institutes when bringing a GR from your own country. Reliable support from your previous supervisor and research institutes in your home country can be invaluable when handling procedures for ABS. Some countries have simplified measures to acquire permits for use of GRs for students and scientists studying abroad. For details, please contact the ABS Support Team for Academia, National Institute of Genetics (abs@nig.ac.jp).

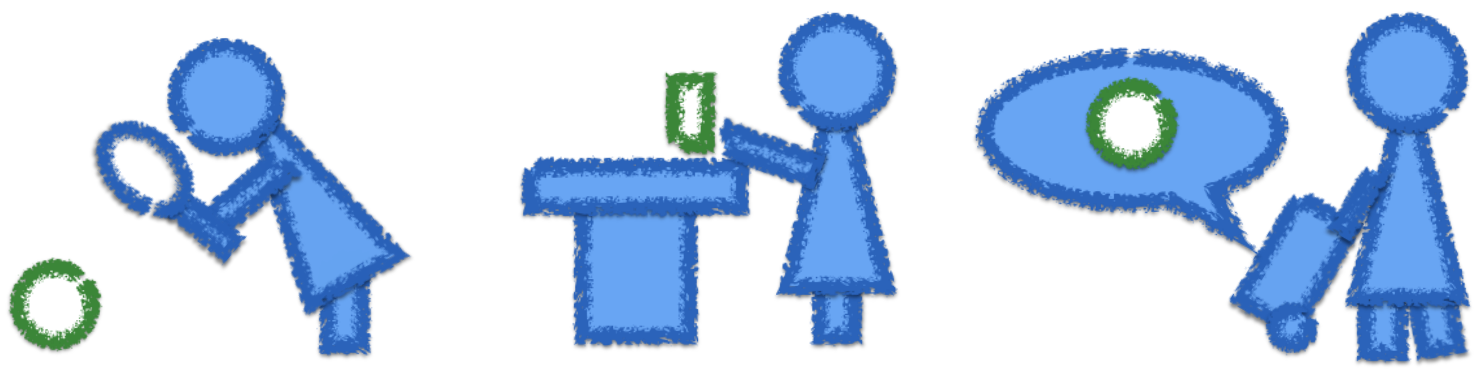
There are still some countries where the national framework for ABS procedures has not been completed and permits are not issued. Even in such cases researchers have a responsibility to observe fundamental standards established by the CBD and protect the rights of indigenous people and traditional knowledge (see page 8). We recommend that you carefully document your efforts to observe ABS in these cases.

You risk severe penalties if you use GRs transferred into Japan without proper permits for research (see page 2). Please make sure that you acquire permits before taking GRs into Japan.

5. Importing GRs into Japan

In addition to ABS, there may be other applicable laws and measures you must comply with when you transfer GRs into Japan; i.e. Plant Protection Act, Act on Domestic Animal Infectious Diseases Control, Infectious Diseases Control Act, Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act, etc.

The quarantine process in Japan has become quite strict in recent years. If proper procedures are not followed, GRs may be confiscated at customs and destroyed. For example, a phytosanitary certificate is strictly required to import plants into Japan. It may not be possible to import GRs into Japan from certain countries – even if it is your home country. In such cases we recommend you consider alternative research strategies such as analyzing the GR within the providing country or relying on your counterpart in the providing country to conduct the analyses.



ABS Guidelines for GR use in Japan

Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (http://www.env.go.jp/press/104061.html) (Japanese only)

The Nagoya Protocol defined detailed regulations that had been unclear in the CBD such as those related to laws of providing countries, frameworks for ABS procedures, and rules that user countries should adhere to. In addition it established the ABSCH to manage and administer these regulations (see pages 10-12).

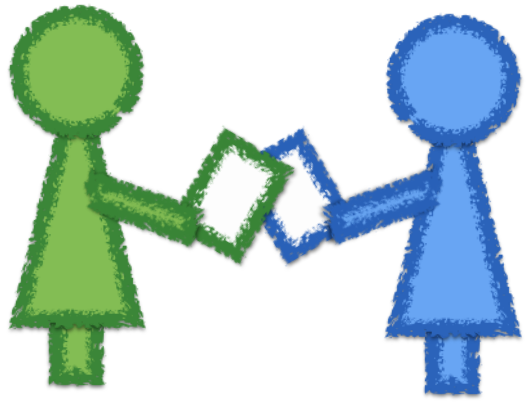
In accordance with NP, Japan also established domestic ABS guidelines for handling GRs from overseas. These came into effect on August 20, 2017 and are summarized in the following four points:

1. When an IRCC is issued by the ABSCH (page 10), the person acquiring the GR (user) should report the lawful acquisition of the GR to the Minister of the Environment (MOE) within six months of the date of issue.
2. MOE posts a report of the lawful acquisition on the MOE web site and also provides this information to the ABSCH.
3. Every five years from the date of the initial report of lawful acquisition, MOE will request that the user issue a progress report about the use and status of the GR.
4. In the event that an NP party country reports a violation of a providing country's ABS laws and regulations, the MOE may request that the GR user or others involved submit a report answering to the allegations and provide this information to the appropriate NP party country.

NOTE: The ABS Guidelines are not retroactive to GRs accessed before August 20, 2017.

Here we would like to emphasize that the ABS Guidelines apply to researchers who have lawfully acquired GRs and have been subsequently issued an IRCC from the ABSCH (see page 11 and item 1 on page 12).

- The ABS Guidelines are not rules for the access and transfer of GRs; rather, they are rules to announce internationally the appropriate acquisition and use of the GRs.
- Once you have been issued an IRCC, concerns related to ABS have already been resolved, and further ABS Guidelines will be easily addressed.
- The most important steps to following ABS Guidelines are those prior to obtaining the IRCC – specifically the appropriate acquisition of GRs in accordance with the ABS laws and procedures in the providing country.



Since NP entered into force, publications on the ABSCH regarding necessary procedures in providing countries and reports of lawful acquisition of GRs by user countries are continuously increasing. As the international demand for and issuance of IRCCs increases, the outlook is positive for the future of access to foreign-sourced GRs and international collaboration with fair sharing of benefits.

By observing the ABS laws and procedures in your home country (or other providing country) and in Japan, both countries can enjoy the benefits of collaborative research of Genetic Resources.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Is ABS needed for non-NP member countries?

In almost all cases, yes. Although specific definitions of ABS were outlined by the Nagoya Protocol, the need to establish and observe ABS was agreed to by all member countries of the CBD. Since all members of the United Nations are signatories of the CBD (with the unique exception of the United States), ABS applies to all member countries whether they ratified NP or not.

2. What about the United States?

When importing GRs from the US, please take care to document the origin and transfer history of the GRs. The US is not a member nation to the CBD, and therefore ABS as outlined in NP does not apply. However, we recommend establishing a joint research agreement and/or a material transfer agreement (MTA). This is especially important when using a GR imported to the US from a third country, since you must ensure it was lawfully acquired in accordance with the laws and procedures in the country of origin.

3. Can I be penalized for not complying with Japan's ABS Guidelines?

No. Although there is no penalty for failing to comply with the ABS Guidelines of Japan, when a provider country alleges violation of ABS-related laws or regulations, the Minister of the Environment may contact the researchers or institutes to urge compliance with ABS (see page 14).

4. Does ABS cover GRs acquired from abroad in the past?

It depends how long ago the sample was acquired. When using GRs acquired before December 29, 1993 (the date CBD came into force), ABS does not apply (see page 7). However, when using GRs acquired after this date you should confirm the sample's history of acquisition, transfer, and ABS measures taken at that time. In addition, please consult with the ABS support team for Academia (abs@nig.ac.jp).

5. Does ABS cover GRs purchased from a market?

In many cases, yes. Even if you buy GRs in **markets** (including **pet shops**), ABS procedures may be necessary for GRs originating outside of Japan. Please confirm the country of origin of GRs as well as the transfer history and consult with the ABS Support Team for Academia (abs@nig.ac.jp).

6. Does ABS cover genetically modified organisms?

Yes. Genetically modified organisms are covered by a separate treaty called the Cartagena Protocol (CP), but some samples may be covered by **both CP and NP** – for example if you create a recombinant from GRs of foreign origin. In such cases ABS procedures would be necessary (see also FAQ 7).

7. Are “model organisms” exempt?

Only if GRs have been taken from providing countries and used internationally before the enforcement of CBD (December 29, 1993). If your sample was already obtained and established as a “model organism” before the CBD came into force, then in principle it is exempt. (However, if new genetic material was obtained from a providing county and added to a previously established “model organism” population, it is not exempt and ABS is necessary.) It does not matter if a GR is a model organism or not; what matters is the date of establishment as a “model organism”.

8. What are derivatives, and are they covered by ABS rules?

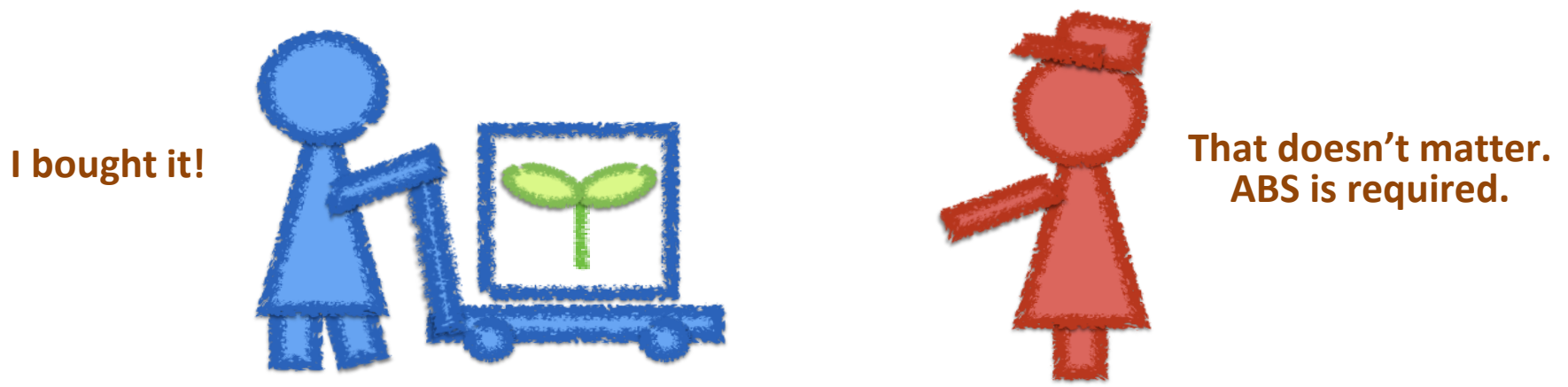
It depends on the providing country. Derivatives are naturally occurring biochemical compounds resulting from gene expression or metabolism of biological or genetic resources (even if they don’t contain functional units of heredity) – for example, snake venom, medicinal components of herbs, etc. Although derivatives are not included in the definition of GRs in either CBD or NP, some countries’ domestic laws include derivatives as GRs and regulate their access and use accordingly. Using derivatives from such countries for your research without permission could be in violation of the providing country’s laws and result in accusation of inappropriate utilization of the material. Please consult with the ABS support team for Academia (abs@nig.ac.jp) if you have any uncertainty regarding derivatives.

9. Is a permit needed to export Japanese GRs out of Japan?

No. Japan requires no special procedures as a GR providing country. However, an MTA should be established before sending GRs overseas. (Note that you must observe other laws and measures such as plant quarantines, export control, etc.)

10. May I provide GRs to other research institutes in Japan?

It depends on the MAT. If there is a provision allowing for transfer of GRs to a third party in mutually agreed terms (MAT) established with your joint research counterpart in the providing country, then you may provide to other institutes.

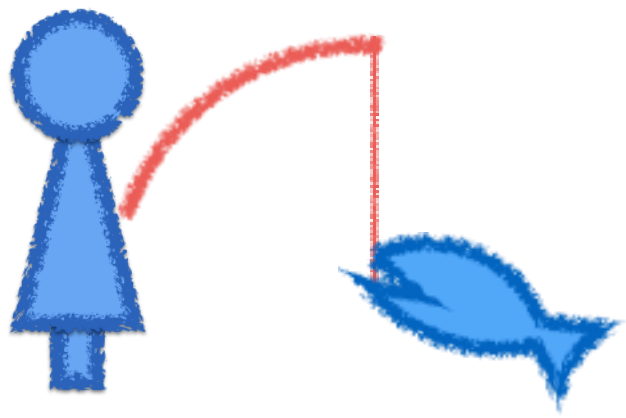


The Value of Non-Monetary Benefits

ABS considerations inspire a lot of attention on monetary benefits arising from research using GRs but not so much on non-monetary benefits. While the value of monetary benefits for GR users as well as the providing countries may be obvious, the value of non-monetary benefits should not be ignored either.

Non-monetary benefits may not necessarily provide immediate economic results, but the long-term results they bring can greatly enhance science in providing countries for generations of researchers to come. Publishing of co-authored papers adds to the achievements of researchers and their institutes giving them recognition and positive evaluation; transfer of technology brings new experimental techniques that can be inherited by multiple generations and passed on to other laboratories; and of course the impact of newly provided educational opportunities cannot be overstated. Such long-lasting benefits cannot lose their value and providing counties will continue to profit from them into the future. When negotiating with the government authorities of providing countries, we suggest you explain in detail and enthusiastically promote the long-lasting value of non-monetary benefits.

Non-monetary benefit sharing helps not only universities, institutes, and researchers, but also brings potential benefits to society and the environment in providing countries. An example of how non-monetary benefits can have a positive impact in the providing country is the case of a Japanese taxonomist who in collaboration with a scientist in the providing county wrote an illustrated reference book of fish, which was presented to workers in the fish market who provided samples and to government officers who issued the necessary permits. Through this collaboration involving the local workers and officials, great interest was generated in science and research for conservation purposes.
As a result, the local fisheries and government could apply techniques from the research to carefully record and statistically analyze the monthly fish catch. This data should provide the basis for sustainable use of marine resources in the near future. The Japanese taxonomist also saw positive feedback from this result as one of the government officials promised to expedite any future permit requests from the researcher’s university.



Useful Websites

See the following URLs for further details on CBD, NP and ABS

ABS support for Academia

by ABS Support Team for Academia, National Institute of Genetics
http://idenshigen.jp (Japanese)
http:// http://nig-chizai.sakura.ne.jp/abs_tft/en/ (English)

ABS support for industry

by Japan Bioindustry Association (JBA)
https://www.mabs.jp/eng/index.html
by National Institute of Technology and Evaluation (NITE)
https://www.nite.go.jp/en/index.html

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

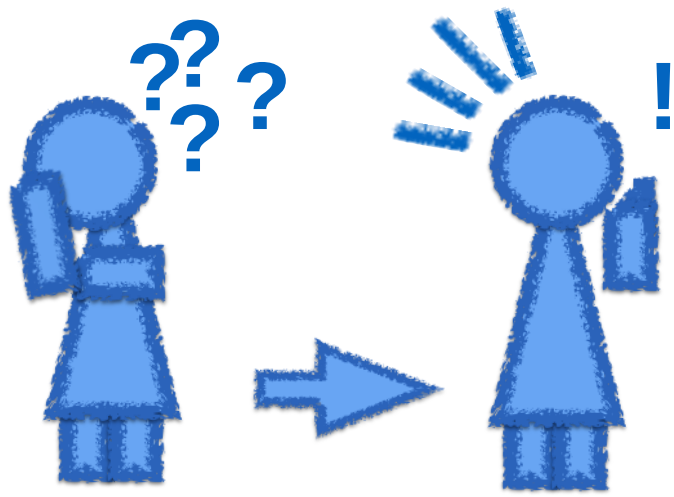
Secretariat: https://www.cbd.int/
Provision: https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf

Nagoya Protocol (NP)

ABS Clearing-House (ABSCH): https://absch.cbd.int
Provision: https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf

Fundamentals of ABS

by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)
http://www.lifescience.mext.go.jp/files/pdf/abs.htm (Japanese)
by Ministry of Environment (MOE)
http://abs.env.go.jp/english.html
by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)
https://www.maff.go.jp/j/kanbo/kankyo/seisaku/GR/s_win_abs.html (Japanese)



Organization of ABS Support Team

MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

NBRP (National BioResource Project)

- Core Facility Upgrading Program
- Genome Information Upgrading Program
- Fundamental Technology Upgrading Program
- **Information Center Upgrading Program**
  - Database Development for Each Resource
  - Great Ape Information Network (GAIN)
  - Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)

ABS Support Team for Academia
National Institute of Genetics

Co-investigators for supporting universities to <u>access GRs abroad</u>

Material Management Center (MMC), Kyushu Univ.
Tukuba-Plant Innovation Research Center (T-PIRC), Univ. of Tsukuba
Makino Herbarium (MAK), Tokyo Metropolitan Univ.

Working group for Supporting universities to set up <u>ABS response system</u>

Tokyo Marine Univ., Mie Univ., Nagasaki Univ., Kyoto Univ., Hiroshima Univ., Kanazawa Univ., Nagoya Univ., Gifu Univ., etc.

Participating international treaty and congress, etc.

The ABS Support Team for Academia is a member of the Information Center Upgrading Program of the National BioResource Project (NBRP) under the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED).

We work in cooperation with member organizations to assist universities and other research institutes acquire GRs abroad and as a member of a “Working Group” to establish an ABS support office in each university and research institute.

Our mission

ABS Support Team for Academia, National Institute of Genetics

The mission of ABS Support Team for Academia is to support cross-border utilization of GRs and international collaboration to promote science in the world. The team mainly works for the universities and research institutes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to assist in the acquisition of GRs abroad and to provide advice to universities to establish thier own ABS support offices through the following activities:

1) ABS help desk
We investigate laws and procedures in many providing countries and provide advice on how to acquire GRs overseas.

2) Provision of ABS information
We provide ABS information via a website and mailing list. (http://idenshigen.jp)

3) ABS lecture course
We regularly hold ABS lecture courses to support universities and research institutes.

4) ABS seminars (on-site or on-line)
We hold ABS seminars either on-site or on-line (free of charge).

5) International workshops and meetings for administrators
We hold meetings with invited specialists in the field of ABS from inside and outside of Japan for discussions.

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**Access and Benefit-sharing Guidebook:
Using Genetic Resources
from your home country
or other foreign countries in Japan**

(version 1.1, 2020-11-25)

Special Caution for International Researchers in Japan:

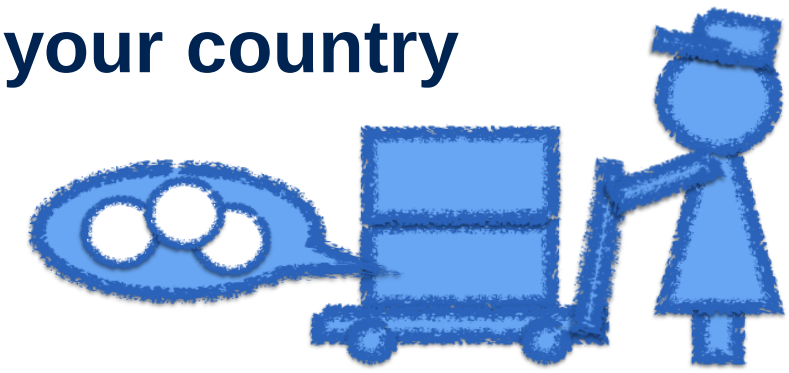
Here we show examples of **potential risks** which may occur when you study overseas genetic resources (GRs) for your research in Japan.

Taking GRs into Japan from your country

States have sovereign rights over their own GRs. It may be a violation of law to take GRs out of any country without first obtaining permission – even from your own country.

GRs received from your collaborator or GRs purchased on the market in your country may be subject to ABS rules. You may need a permit from your country to transfer or study them.

Receiving or purchasing GRs from your country



Transferring GRs from your country to Japan

When transferring GRs, laws and regulations other than ABS also apply; i.e. Plant Protection Act, Infectious Diseases Control Act, etc. in your country and Japan. GRs may be confiscated at customs and destroyed if these rules are not observed.

Consult with the ABS Support Team for Academia, National Institute of Genetics
Phone: 055-981-5831, URL: http://idenshigen.jp, E-mail: abs@nig.ac.jp