

Mandate

The Swiss Expert Committee for Biosafety SECB operates within the domain of biotechnology and gene technology with the goal of protecting people and the environment. The committee was established in 1996 by the Federal Council as an independent expert panel and began work on 1 January 1997. The legal bases for the work of the SECB are the Gene Technology Act, the Environmental Protection Act and the Epidemics Act.

The 15 members of the SECB guarantee a broad expertise covering the whole spectrum of biosafety issues. They provide special knowledge in gene technology, biotechnology and in environmental and health affairs, representing different interest groups such as universities, economy, agriculture and forestry as well as environmental and consumer organisations.

The SECB advises the Federal Council as well as other federal and cantonal authorities.

Executive Office / Contact

The Executive Office prepares the affairs of the Committee in scientific and organisational respects and is enquiry and information office for all issues concerning biosafety.

For further information:

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Photo: www.acw.admin.ch



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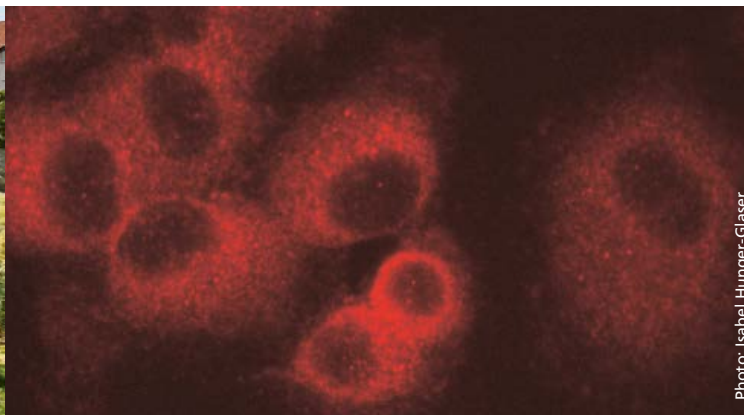
Swiss Confederation

**Swiss Expert Committee
for Biosafety SECB**

Photo: Isabel Hunger-Glaser



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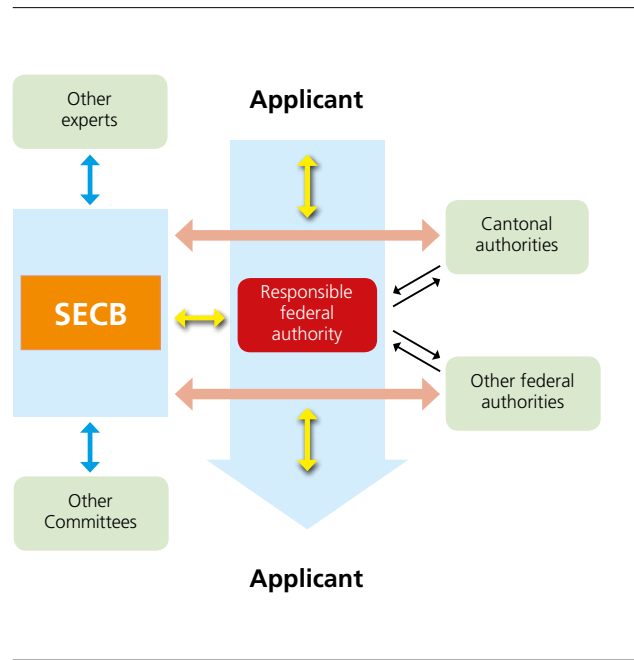


Tasks

The tasks of the SECB are numerous and diverse.
The SECB...

- ... advises the Federal Council and the federal agencies on the drafting of laws, ordinances, guidelines and recommendations.
- ... advises the federal and cantonal authorities on enforcement of the regulations.
- ... issues statements on license applications.
- ... publishes recommendations on safety measures for studies carried out in contained systems (research and diagnostic laboratories, greenhouses, animal institutes etc.).
- ... commissions expert reports on current and complex topics related to biosafety.
- ... informs the Federal Council and the public about its work.
- ... reviews new findings and trends relating to biosafety.
- ... supports training courses on the subject of biosafety.
- ... works together with other national and international (biosafety) committees.
- ... meets approximately six times per year.

Workflow



License Applications

The SECB assesses applications for activities with genetically modified, pathogenic or alien organisms.
The following topics are evaluated:

- ... work carried out in contained systems (research, diagnostics and production)
- ... clinical trials and gene therapies
- ... experimental releases
- ... applications for the marketing of genetically modified food and feed
- ... pesticides that contain micro- or macro-organisms

