

The import of biological research material is a silent barrier to biotechnology in the Global South

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Supplemental Information

Table 1 – Total cost and cost premium of DNA Polymerase in LAC and the U.S.

The cost data derive from national diagnostic reports commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank on importing biological materials and reagents in Latin America and the Caribbean. The simulation used as a reference *Platinum SuperFi II DNA Polymerase* (catalog #12361250, Invitrogen–ThermoFisher Scientific), priced in the U.S. at USD 4,000. The estimates exclude local distributor expenses and charges, only reflecting costs from the supplier’s door to that of the local distributor

	Argentina	Brazil	Colombia	Costa Rica	Ecuador	Guatemala	Mexico	Panama	Uruguay	United States
Total cost (after nationalization)	10.071,57 USD	6.039 USD	6.476 USD	5.826 USD	5.489 USD	5.074 USD	5.460 USD	4.958 USD	7.534 USD	4,000 USD
Markup (%)	151,79%	50.98%	61.90%	45,65%	37%	26.85%	36.50%	23.95%	88.35%	0%

Source: Data compiled by Bortz, Stubrin, Zornada & Anta (2025) from national diagnostic reports conducted by consultants and commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank for Argentina (Bortz & Zornada, 2022; 2023; 2024), Brazil (Bomtempo, 2022), Costa Rica (Couto, 2022), Ecuador (Del Hierro, 2022), Colombia (Forero Oliveros, 2022), Guatemala (Silva, 2022), Mexico (González, 2022), Panama (Fuentes-Campos, 2022) and Uruguay (Faccini Pose, 2022).

Table 2 – Import time range for biological materials by country.

Timeframes were compiled from the national diagnostic reports commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank on the importation of biological materials and reagents in LAC.

	Argentina	Brazil	Colombia	Costa Rica	Ecuador	Guatemala	Mexico	Panama	Uruguay
Average import times under the general regime (calendar days)	20-30	20-45	15–45	60-90, 15 for special orders.	No average time available; paperwork alone takes at least 60 days.	No total time data; estimated at least 90 days.	45	30-45	20-60; 15 for special orders; +30–45 if consolidated at origin.
Average import times with S&T tax exemptions or health permits (calendar days)	45-60 days	Delays are registered to 2-4 months.	Up to 45 with specific permits. Through S&T offices, 3-5 months.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	Basic permits take 15–30 days, while phytosanitary/zoosanitary permits can take up to 5 months.	Up to 6 months for complex authorization s.

Source: Data compiled by Bortz, Stubrin, Zornada & Anta (2025) from national diagnostic reports conducted by consultants and commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank for Argentina (Bortz & Zornada, 2022; 2023; 2024), Brazil (Bomtempo, 2022), Costa Rica (Couto, 2022), Ecuador (Del Hierro, 2022), Colombia (Forero Oliveros, 2022), Guatemala (Silva, 2022), Mexico (González, 2022), Panama (Fuentes-Campos, 2022) and Uruguay (Faccini Pose, 2022).

Comparative report:

Bortz, G., Stubrin, L., Zornada, C., & Anta, R. (2025). *Análisis comparado de los procesos de importación de materiales biológicos en América Latina y el Caribe* [Comparative analysis of biological material import processes in Latin America and the Caribbean]. Washington, DC, Inter-American Development Bank, <https://doi.org/10.18235/0013827>

National diagnostic reports:

Bomtempo, J. V. (2022). *Diagnóstico do processo de importação de materiais biológicos e reagentes no Brasil. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Bortz, G., Zornada, F. (2022; 2023; 2024). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Argentina. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Couto, G. (2022). *Diagnóstico comparativo del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos en América Latina. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Couto, G. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Costa Rica. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Del Hierro, A. G. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Ecuador. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Faccini Pose, I. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Uruguay. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Forero Oliveros, J. C. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Colombia. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Fuentes-Campos, E. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Panamá. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

González, T. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en México. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Silva, J. (2022). *Diagnóstico del proceso de importación de materiales biológicos y reactivos en Guatemala. Informe final*, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.