

# GMO regulation needs to be rethought from scratch

To cite the European Commission, « The EU has established a legal framework to ensure that the development of modern biotechnology, and more specifically of GMOs, takes place in safe conditions ». Many, including myself, have shown that all credible scientific evidence confirm that authorised GMOs are indeed safe. However, a major failure of the current regulation is that it has almost killed-off agricultural biotechnology in Europe.

The reason: although plant breeding can create diverse varieties, regulation has created a unique legal object called a “GMO”, easy to demonise without having to clarify which use one objects to. Everything goes! Nobody knows (what a GMO really is)!

Whatever the regulatory classification of the new plant breeding technologies (NBTs), if based on semantic interpretation of the GMO definition according to the current Directive: the same cause will produce the same effects. If a “GMO”, NBTs are shot point blank. If exempted, they will be vilified as “hidden GMOs” and killed by inches.

Ag-biotech is not an agricultural production mode, it is a mean to increase trait biodiversity. What is important is what is done with a product, not how the product was obtained. The only sensible approach would be a product-based regulation: all new traits, independent of how they were obtained, if they belong to the same technical class, they should be subject to the same technical scrutiny. Risk assessment should be performed in a scientifically-sound manner, proportionally to the actual risks, avoiding ideological overloads as is currently the case.

Biotechnology urgently needs to be reconsidered within reality and requires an exfiltration from political struggles. Scientists (including EFSA) need to be protected from intimidation, intrusion into laboratories, vandalism of experiments and violence against persons.

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