

Kenya Biosafety Regulation Published

The implementing regulations for the Kenya Biosafety Act 2009 were gazetted on 15th August 2011. They were published via Kenya Gazette supplements 73, 74, and 76 as legal notices no 96, 97, and 98. The three sets of regulations comprise: the contained use, the Environmental release and Import, export and transit of genetically modified organisms in Kenya. They provide guidance on procedures to follow in the areas of research, commercialization and trade of genetically modified organisms.

By gazetting the regulations, Kenya is now fully compliant with the international requirements on the development and utilization of the technology. Indeed, the country has a Biotechnology Policy, a Biosafety Act, a functional institutional arrangement through the National Biosafety Authority and a mechanism for public participation through the National Biotechnology Awareness Strategy (Bio AWARE). Trials on Bt cotton are at an advanced stage. With these new developments, researchers can now proceed to the open field trials of the crop and eventual commercialization.

"We are very happy with the regulations as they are, since they reflect the recommendations of all stakeholders. The regulations are now opening up the gates for commercialization of GM Crops in Kenya" said Dr. Charles Waturu, the Principal Investigator on the Bt cotton project, who is also the chairman of the Bt cotton commercialization task force in Kenya.

Link: - <http://www.isaaa.org/kc/cropbiotechupdate/article/default.asp?ID=8342>