



Science For A Better Life

Southern Africa Region Perspective on Agricultural GM Policy

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Agenda/ Content

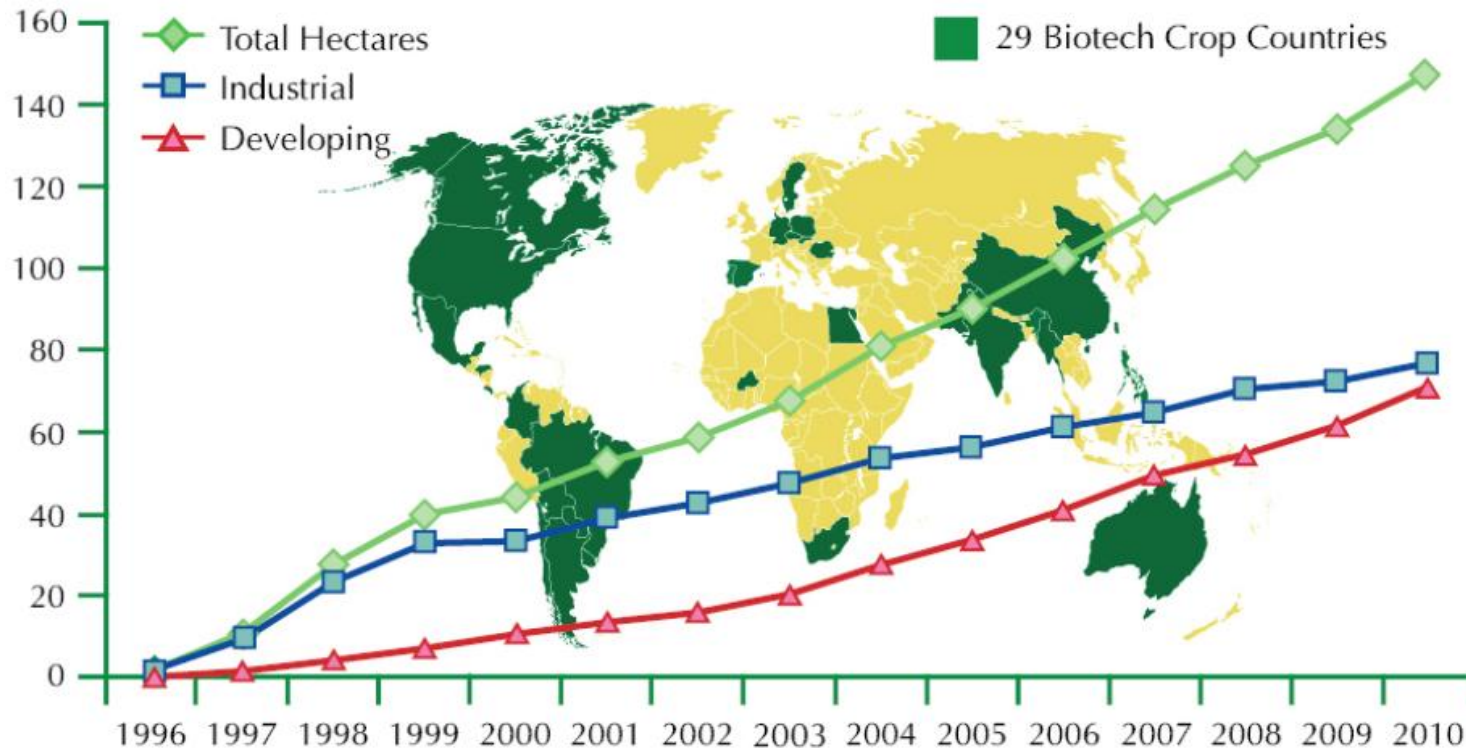
- Adoption of Biotechnology
- Regulatory Status in southern Africa
- Harmonization
- Conclusion

Plant Biotech Development

Global Area of Biotech Crops



GLOBAL AREA OF BIOTECH CROPS
Million Hectares (1996-2010)



A record 15.4 million farmers, in 29 countries, planted 148 million hectares (365 million acres) in 2010, a sustained increase of 10% or 14 million hectares (35 million acres) over 2009.

Plant Biotech Development: Focus on Africa



2010 (3 countries)
*South Africa, Burkina Faso
and Egypt*



2015 (up to 10 countries)
*South Africa, Burkina Faso,
Egypt, Mali, Togo, Nigeria, Kenya,
Uganda, Tanzania
and Malawi*

Plant Biotech Crops are Regulated



- Countries have been encouraged to develop biosafety frameworks since the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety entered into force in 2003
- Countries in the region are all signatories to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Majority have been recipients of UNEP-GEF funds (1999-2009)

Current Regulatory Environment

[1/2]



Country	Legislation	Gist of Law	Current status
Angola			Recently ratified the CPB; has a standing ban on GMOS
Botswana	Draft Biosafety Bill		Biosafety framework, legislation and operational arrangements awaiting parliamentary approval.
Lesotho	Draft Biosafety Bill; Biosafety Policy approved by parliament.	Policy focussed on regulating transboundary movement	Guaranteed 4 years GEF funding for implementation of Framework
Malawi	Biosafety Act 2002; Regulations 2007	Reference made to enabling framework to promote and regulate biotech.	May or may not have conducted Bt cotton trials
Mauritius	GMO Act 2003	Provides for mandatory labelling: public participation is responsibility of biosafety committees	
Mocambique	Biosafety Decree 2007	Regulates GMOs in transit and food aid for local use; also prohibits others	Regulations being revised to enable R&D

Current Regulatory Environment

[2/2]



Country	Legislation	Gist of Law	Current status
Namibia	Biosafety Act No.7 of 2006	Regulates products, though exemptions possible; includes provisions for labelling, identification and packaging	
South Africa	GMO Act No. 15 of 1997; Food Stuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act: NEMBA 2006; CPA 2008	Process based regulation; 2 nd amendment brings it in line with local developments and international obligations; Consumers' right to know	Longer timelines and increased requirements: EIA, mandatory labelling
Zambia	Biosafety Act 2007; Draft Regulations	Has a wide scope including products and pharmaceuticals; crops/livestock of strategic importance are prohibited; very precautionary.	Has conducted cotton field trials in the past
Zimbabwe	Research Regulations 2000; National Biotechnology Policy 2005 National Biotechnology Authority Act 2006	Policy enables biotech use: Regulates process and products; also establishes a fund for marketing biotech products	Although field trials of cotton and tobacco have been conducted in the past, no commercial approvals have been granted to date.



What is at stake?

- Every country is developing its own requirements
- This leads to an escalation of requirements
- Lack of science foundation (especially in inexperienced countries)
- Even though regulatory oversight is achieved, enforcement discrepancies will dominate international trade issues
- Harmonization of Methods of Analysis and Sampling



Harmonization?

Article 14 of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety permits agreements and arrangements:

- Bilateral
- Regional
- Multilateral



Advantages of Harmonization

- Regional initiatives: develop guidelines that help the local risk assessors

Stakeholders interested in predictability of operational framework:

- Policy Coherence
- Mutual Recognition
- Optimization of Resources
- Faster Assessments



Southern Africa Networks {1}

Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions

- Adopted policy on GMOs:
 - Evidence based decision-making
 - Consumers' right to know
 - Advocates bottom up approach to GM research
 - Harmonization

- Southern Africa Development Cooperation
 - Regional Agricultural Policy



Southern Africa Networks {2}

- Southern Africa Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and Biosafety
 - A guide document on the managing and handling of food aid in transit
 - National and regional policies based on the AU Model Law and the CPB
 - Capacity building
 - Public Awareness and participatory programmes



Southern Africa Networks {3}

- Regional Approach to Biosafety for Southern African Countries
 - USAID
 - IFPRI, Programme for Biosafety Systems



Southern Africa Networks {3}

- Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
 - Institutional Arrangements;
 - Advanced Informed Agreement;
 - Information requirements;
 - Public awareness;
 - Packaging, identification and labelling



Future Activities

Appointment of Regional Agricultural & Environmental Initiative- Africa as subsidiary

- Capacity Building
- Risk Assessment
- Public Awareness
- Approval of SABBAC framework



Conclusions

- Adoption of Crop Biotech increasing globally
 - Imports, food aid likely to contain 100% GM content

- Operational biosafety frameworks are imperative
 - Facilitate trade

- Need to increase local capacities , including in public R&D institutions

- Technology transfer and development through enhanced Public Private Partnerships



Conclusions

- Transparency in decision-making processes
 - Public information is a quasi International Human Right

- Reportedly a number of achievements
 - Countries in the region all have National Biosafety Frameworks
 - Several harmonization projects initiated



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Thank you!