

Statement on the EU Commission study on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs)

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A STATEMENT PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SEED FEDERATION



The International Seed Federation (ISF) welcomes the publication of the European Commission study on Novel Genomic Techniques. Based on the findings of this study, an urgent action from European institutions and Member States is needed to develop clear, predictable, science-based enabling policies and regulations on products derived from innovative plant breeding methods.

The study shows that NGTs have the potential to contribute to a more sustainable food system. ISF reiterates its position that that [clear, predictable, science-based and risk-based policies and regulations](#), as well as their effective implementation, are essential in developing quality seeds that are accessible to all and to give farmers access to a full range of choices and solutions to contribute to achieving sustainable food production systems.

That study rightly pointed out that the current EU GMO legislation is not fit for purpose for some NGTs and their products, and that it needs adaptation to scientific and technological progress.

ISF calls for the EU's regulatory framework to allow for a differentiated legal and practical approach to products derived from innovative plant breeding methods, that is consistent with most other parts of the world.

As the Commission study rightly concludes, different regulatory oversight for NGTs in other countries will limit (reduce and slow down) the capacity of the sector to innovate; reduce the diversity of plant genetic resources; have a negative effect on research collaborations; and hinder the movement of germplasm and seed globally. In addition, commodity trade disruption will occur. All this will impact sustainable agricultural development and pose a threat to food security.

ISF agrees with the intention of the Commission to have an open dialogue on NGTs. The international seed sector recognises that promoting acceptance of plant breeding innovations should be a joint effort to engage diverse audiences, starting from the agricultural value chain, to consumers and international and national policymakers. Nevertheless, we would like to urge the EU institutions and member states to act now and avoid undue lengthy process. There is no time to waste as the first genome edited products are already on the market in certain parts of the world and are contributing to address the challenge of climate change and food security. •