

Nigeria: Pressure mounts on President to sign biosafety bill

STAKEHOLDERS in the agriculture and research business have resolved not to relent in their resolve to explore biotechnology to improve farm and animal yields in the country. But to do this, they need a biosafety bill to provide the national regulatory framework to guide research and to enable them move their genetically modified products from confined trial to the market.

National biosafety bills provide a framework to ensure that the development and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and products derived from them do not negatively affect plant, animal and human health, agricultural systems, or the environment. They have, therefore, intensified pressure through various means to get President Goodluck Jonathan to assent to the biosafety bill. The bill entitled: 'A bill for an act to provide for the management of biosafety and for other related matters 2007' was passed by both chambers of the National Assembly and has been pending the president's signature to become law since then.

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