

## Poor pay for the affluent's misplaced anxiety over GMOs

I wrote several papers on the political economy of agricultural biotechnology that analyzes the opposition and support of GM.

The opposition to GM may include those that benefit from GMO regulation. In the same way that big corporations look at the bottom line, "Big Environment" also considers their financial well-being in taking positions. But in my heart, I feel that there is a very simple explanation for the popular opposition towards GMO. People are often anxious about new technologies, and others may benefit from this anxiety and resist change, sometimes not realizing that the unintended consequences could result in the misery of the silent majority.

Obviously the people who oppose GM do not always recognize the implications, but Golden Rice is a striking example where the practical ban of GM in food is costly in human-health terms. In my view, erecting unneeded regulatory barriers is a terrible policy mistake. Even if we had 20% adoption, we could have prevented 1 million cases of blindness. The economic cost is also important, but what really matters is human misery that could have been alleviated.

**Read the full, original article:** [Should the poor pay for the anxieties of the rich?](#)