Tanzania to begin confined trials of drought, pest resistant GMO maize

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

At last Tanzanian scientists have been allowed to release confined field trials of transgenic [maize], marking a new turn is the raging debate over adoption of biotechnology plants.

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Dr Florence Turuka [the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries] said that he was aware of the challenges led to delay of the testing of genetically modified maize germplasm in confined field trials in Tanzania. In 2015 the Government amended the Environmental Management (Biosafety) Regulations of 2009 by removing strict liability for research to provide better environment for conducting transgenic research in the country.

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. . . . He reiterated that the revised regulations are a first step towards a more fundamental reform of the regulatory framework, which will become more enabling over time. Therefore, the implementation of transgenic research in Tanzania will produce science-based evidence on the benefits of the technology.

This strategic step-wise approach will allow research output to influence policy and decision-making as the government embarks on further amendments to remove strict liability for commercialization in line with its National Biotechnology Policy (2010).

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He said the goal of the [Water Efficient Maize for Africa] Project is to improve food security and rural livelihoods among African small scale maize producers through improved drought-tolerant and insect-protected maize varieties by using conventional breeding techniques and modern biotechnology tools; and to make the seed available to small scale farmers in sub-Saharan African countries royalty-free. "This is a very noble goal, because maize is one of the most important food security crops in most sub-Saharan African countries."

Read full, original post: [Researchers urged to ensure improved seeds they produce reach farmers](#)