

## Ecuador passes law allowing GMO crop research

*[Editor's note: The following article has been translated from Spanish.]*

Ecuador has approved a law allowing the entry of genetically modified (GM) seeds into the country for research (non-commercial) purposes only, this under a clause established in the 2008 constitution that, while declaring the country as “GMO-free”, adds an exception which would allow the approval of the entry of GM crops into the country.

The National Assembly of Ecuador approved ... the free entry of GM seeds into Ecuador for research purposes. The issue was taken to the congress as a presidential veto to change the article 56 of the “Law about Agrobiodiversity, Seeds and Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture” that prevents the entry of GM crops.

The new reform was approved with 73 votes of majority of Alianza PAIS party (AP) and with 55 votes with “NO” in the middle of harsh criticisms from the opposition.

Lawmakers, such as Marcela Aguiñaga (AP), stressed that a law will be passed for transgenic seeds to be investigated in universities. Doris Soliz (AP) added that opposing knowledge and research is “a disservice to the country.”

The partial veto of the bill about “Agrobiodiversity, Seeds and Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture” makes it possible to develop direct scientific research with GM seeds in the country, but also allows the Executive power to be able to regulate this research. At the same time, such regulations encourage instances such as the Assembly to call on the authorities to account for how the entry of GM seeds or transgenic crops is controlled.

“It’s not about marketing,” because the Constitution forbids it. “We talked about having the possibility to investigate seeds and to be able to make an analysis that allows us to advance in knowledge, with an adequate regulation, taking all the measures of biosecurity”, emphasized the president of the Assembly, Jose Serrano.

### **Previous discussions**

Ecuador had already had intense discussions about GM crops. After declaring the country “free of crops and transgenic seeds” in the 2008 Constitution, the President Rafael Correa raised the possibility of reconsidering that prohibition under an exception of article 401, which mentions that “only in case of national interest, the genetically modified seeds and crops may be introduced into the country “.

“Genetically modified seeds can quadruple production and lift the most depressed sectors out of misery,” President Correa declared in 2012. However, constitutional reform was never undertaken.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Ecuador aprueba el ingreso de semillas transgénicas con fines de investigación](#)