

## Viewpoint: Africa must modernize farms by embracing biotechnology to fight malnutrition

*[Editor's note: Mark Lynas is a British journalist and environmentalist.]*

Africa desperately needs agricultural modernisation. With the most rapidly growing population in the world and hundreds of millions still suffering malnutrition, African leaders cannot afford to close the door to innovation.

Poverty is endemic and “yield gaps” mean that African farmers commonly harvest less than a tenth of the global average in maize and other crops.

Part of the problem has been political resistance to adopting new and improved technologies, particularly in seed breeding. Some of this unwillingness has been home-grown, but much has been imported to Africa by rich-country NGOs with a colonialist ideological agenda that see poverty as dignified and want to keep farmers permanently trapped in subsistence lifestyles.

...

[T]heir most determined opposition has been to genetically improved crops, the so-called GMOs, about which extremist fearmongering has become routine across the continent.

...

In Tanzania, I witnessed NGO-sponsored farmers claiming that consuming GMOs would make their children homosexual.

All these statements are absurd and scientifically baseless, but unfortunately African governments have taken them all too seriously.

...

But things are shifting and today's winds of change are sweeping across Africa.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Africa must modernise its farms in order to fight hunger and poverty](#)**