

## South Africa urges neighboring countries to learn from its success with biotech

South Africa is urging other African countries to learn from its latest strategy and adopt more holistic policies around biotechnology.

Ben Durham, chief director in charge of bio-innovation at South Africa's Department of Science and Technology, said biotechnology adoption works better when it is clearly integrated into various aspects of a country's development, including industry, health and other areas beyond agriculture.

South Africa is currently leading the continent in agricultural biotech .... Estimates are that between 1998 and 2015, economic gain from GM crops to South Africa stood at \$2.1 billion. South Africa is also one of the continent's major food exporters.

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Durham is encouraging these countries to look at the broader picture when handling biotechnology instead of focusing narrowly on increasing agricultural productivity. "My advice is really to focus on the economic impacts that you want and work backwards from there," he said.

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More than 30 years on, a number of African countries have now begun to follow suit. Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Mozambique are undertaking trials of biotech crops following the establishment of regulatory frameworks on biotechnology. In Nigeria, a National Biotechnology Development Authority has been established. And in Ghana, the National Biosafety Authority has been given a dual mandate to both regulate and promote [crop] biotech.

**Read full, original article:** [South Africa tells the continent: "Learn from our biotech example"](#)