

Viewpoint: 'Africa needs to network and share crop biotechnology advances'

In this interview with Nkechi Isaac, the chairman of Ghana's Parliamentary Select Committee on Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), Dr. Emmanuel Marfo, insists that the continent has nothing to lose by embracing modern agricultural biotechnology and risks remaining an import-dependent continent if she cannot deploy innovative technologies to feed her growing population.

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MARFO: I think if we all come to understand the importance of science and technology in promoting development on the continent, we will have the political will to do what we are supposed to do. That will start with a networking approach where parliamentarians who have oversight over science and technology activities in their countries start talking to each other.

...

So, over the next couple of weeks, we are planning to have an exchange between our committee and the Nigerian committee. Nigeria and Ghana are two leading economies in West Africa and when we start, we will use our parliamentary network to rope in other members of parliament (MP) from other jurisdictions and, gradually, it will take shape.

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I think the lesson in there is that we need to decentralise research. I think Nigeria is doing the same. In this sense, Ghana and Nigeria lead in creating a scientific research infrastructure that makes institutes more focused on their delivery.

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