

Press statement

30 April 2021

Plant ETP welcomes the publication of the Commission's study on 'new genomic techniques'

Plant ETP and its members, representing the plant sector, from academia, public institutions, industry and the farming community, welcome the publication of the EU commission's study on 'new genomic techniques' (NGTs).

Plant ETP greatly supports the main findings of the study which recognise that the use of NGTs in plants can contribute to creating sustainable food systems and provide societal benefits. The study also concludes that the 2001 GMO legislation is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be adapted to align with scientific and technological progress.

Plant ETP participated in the study by providing input on the need for supportive legislation to promote innovation for the greater benefit of society. The Green Deal and its Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies set ambitious targets for 2030. In order to maintain crop yield while reducing external inputs (e.g. fertilisers, irrigation and plant protection products), efforts and investments in plant breeding and its supporting science, need to be massively increased. Considering the length of time needed to develop new crop varieties, as well as the increasing speed of pest and disease migration and weather volatility, it is unlikely that current conventional breeding methods alone will be sufficient to meet the needs of farmers and society by 2030. NGTs have the potential to significantly increase breeding efficiency and speed, delivering the traits needed for nutritious, secure, and sustainable crops.

The need to adjust regulations is also of great importance to retain the EU's competitive position in research and industry globally, for instance in relation to the USA and China.

There is a real opportunity to enable the research, seed and breeding sectors to help farmers meet the challenges of climate change and the Green Deal goals, while safeguarding both food security and affordability, as well as their own livelihoods. There is great urgency to act, in order to get EU plant research and innovation back on track to deliver by 2030.

The Plant ETP looks forward to the next steps and to taking part in the discussions with the Commission and relevant stakeholders.

LINKS: [Commission's study on 'new genomic techniques'](#)