

To:
Ambassadors of the
Permanent Representations
of EU Member States

Brussels, 12th March 2025

Open Letter: Promoting a common approach in the EU Council for the NGTs legislative proposal

Dear Excellencies,

Plants for the Future ETP (Plant ETP), representing the European academic community, the seed and breeding sector, and the farming community, hereby **expresses our support for reaching a common approach on the legislative proposal for plants obtained by certain NGTs**, in the upcoming COREPER meeting on 14th March.

As the calendar reads, it is almost twelve years since the use of gene editing (the most known NGT) was first demonstrated in plants, and over six years since the European Court of Justice delivered its verdict on the status of targeted mutagenesis (an outcome of NGTs), as falling under the scope of the GMO 2001/18/EC Directive (GMO Directive)¹.

Plant ETP welcomes the Polish Presidency's balanced proposal, which is based on the scientific fact that category 1 NGT plants are as safe as conventionally bred plants and should therefore be regulated in the same way. We ask the Council to demonstrate that it is ready to proceed to trilogues, with the intention to create an innovation-friendly environment that will leverage the EU's scientific excellence and technological discoveries for the benefit of its agrifood stakeholders, citizens and the environment.

Plant ETP also acknowledges that there are some stakeholders that, for various reasons, would like to exclude NGTs from their production and supply chains. To ensure freedom of choice, the seed and breeding sector is committed to providing transparency on whether NGTs were used during variety development, in a public database. This would allow growers and supply chains to exclude varieties obtained by NGTs from their production or supply chains, if they wish to do so, without imposing disproportionate burden and hindering their use by others. In fact, voluntary schemes to exclude certain breeding techniques already exist, such as the

¹ [DIRECTIVE 2001/18/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 12 March 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and repealing Council Directive 90/220/EEC](#)

“Positive list of cell fusion-free vegetable varieties” published annually by FIBL², and could easily be extended to NGTs.

The EU Green Deal sets ambitious goals for Europe and particularly our agrifood systems to become more resilient and sustainable, while ensuring competitiveness. To meet the needs of a fossil fuel-free bioeconomy by 2050, significant efforts from stakeholders, particularly farmers and breeders, will be required to provide a diverse range of nutritious crops adapted for low input production and the impacts of climate change, while protecting biodiversity. To enable this, innovative solutions and technologies should be available to all production systems that would like to benefit from them. Ensuring real freedom of choice should always balance the right to avoid certain technologies, with the right to access and use these same technologies and their resulting products, depending on one’s preference.

On behalf of Plant ETP, I thank you for your time and support.



Kind regards,

Amrit Nanda, Executive manager

Plants for the Future ETP (Plant ETP) is a multi-stakeholder European Technology Platform representing the plant sector, from the seed and breeding sector, the farming community and academia. Plant ETP brings stakeholders from the plant sector together to consider the challenges and opportunities of agrifood value chains in a holistic way, while developing a vision for future systems spanning food, feed, and biobased raw materials. In this way, Plant ETP provides strategic direction, recommendations of essential research and innovation, and science-based advice for the benefit of policymakers, research funding providers, practitioners, and innovators throughout agrifood value chains.

² FIBL [Positive list 2024/2025 | No. 1179 - Cell fusion free varieties in vegetable production](#)