



## **Food Agriculture and Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)**

# **PRESS RELEASE**

9 December 2008

### **KENYA APPROVES GMO BILL**

**Kenya has gone through a rigorous process over several years of public and parliamentary debates, and amendments, before finally approving the Biosafety Bill that will regulate research, development, adoption, and trade in genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The Bill was approved by an overwhelming majority in parliament on 9 December 2008 and is expected to be shortly signed into law by the president.**

**The Bill flows from the National Biotechnology Development Policy of 2006 that has aimed to create an enabling regulatory environment for research, development and production of products derived through modern biotechnology that covers plant and animal production, vaccines, diagnostics, and human health applications. The guidelines drafted by the National Council for Science and Technology in 1998, under the Science and Technology Act of 1980 had served as interim framework under which genetic modification research was conducted on GM cassava, maize, cotton, and sweet potatoes in confined facilities, as well as diagnostic kits for animal disease detection and vaccine development. In fact, Kenya has been conducting contained trials at research stations on Bt insect resistant cotton and Bt maize for some four years, and, recently, greenhouse trials with GM streak virus resistant maize. An application has been submitted for clinical animal trials with a novel, home-grown GM vaccine against Rift Valley Fever, a devastating livestock disease in East Africa.**

**The law not only will serve to provide a functional biosafety framework but is also a requirement under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to manage transboundary movement of Living Modified Organisms including seeds and grain.**

**END..... 9 December 2008**

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The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) is an autonomous regional stakeholder driven policy research, analysis and implementation network that was formally established in 1997. FANRPAN was formed by the governments, researchers, policy analysts and farmers, private sector of 13 Southern African countries, along with other stakeholders, to develop such knowledge by strengthening the region's capacity for policy analysis and by fostering stakeholder participation in policymaking processes. FANRPAN currently has activities in 13 Southern African countries namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Since its inception in 1997, FANRPAN has established itself as a reliable source of research-backed policy advice and an inclusive platform for policy dialogue.

**VISION:** A food secure southern Africa free from hunger and poverty.

**MISSION** To promote effective food, agriculture and natural resources policies by

- supporting demand-driven **policy research**,
- amplifying the **voices** of farmers and civil society groups in policy debates and facilitating linkages between government and civil society, and
- **building capacity** for policy analysis and policy dialogue in southern Africa.

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