

GENETICALLY MODIFIED (GM) FOOD SAFETY ASSESSMENT IN KENYA



THE BASICS



BIOSAFETY LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

Kenya has in place a robust policy, legislative and institutional mechanism for implementation of biotechnology innovations.

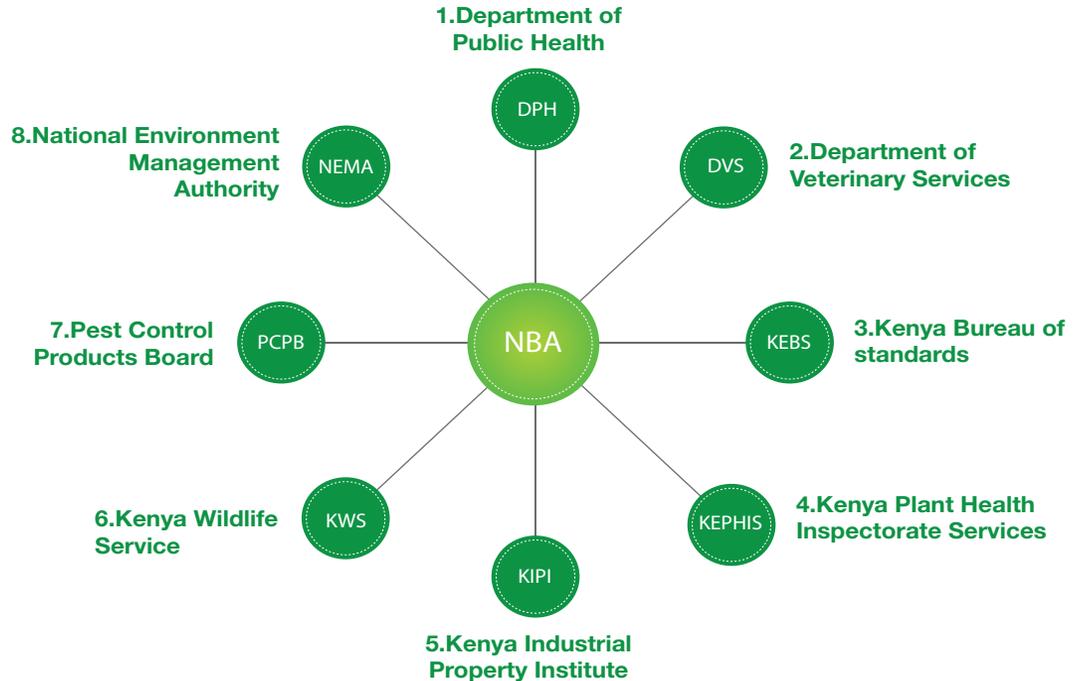
- Ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in 2003 to guide implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks.
- Approved the National Policy on Biotechnology Development in 2006 to guide research and commercialization of modern biotechnology products.
- Enacted the Biosafety Act in 2009 that lays down legal and institutional frameworks for governing modern biotechnology. The Act served to establish the National Biosafety Authority (NBA) in 2010



REGULATORY AGENCIES

In Kenya, regulation of Genetically Modified (GM) foods is a mandate of the National Biosafety Authority (NBA).

The National Biosafety Authority was established under Kenya Biosafety Act No. 2 of 2009. To achieve its mandate, NBA works closely with eight regulatory agencies.



BIOSAFETY REGULATIONS

Since its inception, NBA has developed and continues to implement four biosafety regulations;

Environmental
release, 2011

Export, import
and transit,
2011

Contained
use, 2011

Labeling
2012



The four regulations ensure;

1. Research on genetic modification is done under appropriate experimental conditions
2. Open cultivation of genetically modified crops is safe for human health and the environment
3. Safe movement of genetically modified materials in and out of the country
4. Accurate consumer information and traceability of genetically modified products in the food supply chain

SAFETY ASSESSMENT

PRINCIPLE

The National Biosafety Authority implements the Cartagena protocol on Biosafety in order to address safety for human health and the environment in relation to modern biotechnology.

Safety of GM foods is assessed relative to the conventional counterpart having a history of safe use, taking into account both intended and unintended effects. A case-by-case approach is adopted for each GM food under review.

PRACTICE

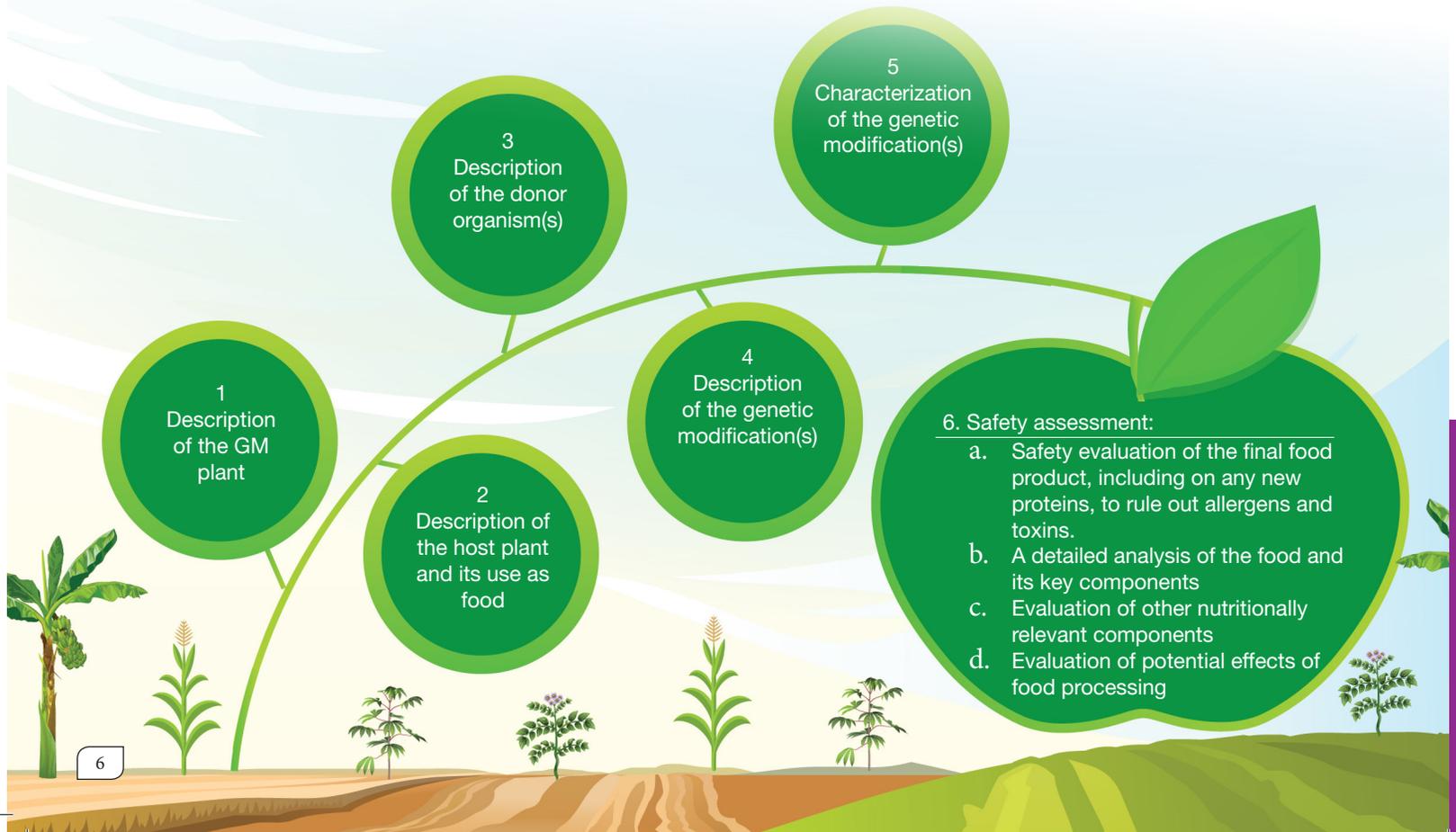
In GM food safety assessment, NBA follows the relevant guidelines adopted from the International Food Code Codex Alimentarius to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in food trade.

Kenya has domesticated Codex Alimentarius in NBA's guidelines for safety assessment of foods derived from genetically modified organisms.



THE FRAMEWORK

Safety assessment of GM foods follows a stepwise process of addressing relevant factors;



GM FOOD SAFETY TESTING REQUIREMENTS



i) Experiments for generating GM food safety assessment data are designed and conducted in accordance with sound scientific concepts and principles, as well as Good Laboratory Practice

(ii) Sensitivity of all analytical methods must be documented

(iii) Primary data is made available to regulatory authorities at request

GOAL

The goal of each GM safety assessment is to provide assurance that the food does not cause harm when prepared, used and/or eaten according to its intended use, in light of the best available scientific knowledge. A decision is made regarding whether the GM food is as safe as the conventional counterpart taking into account dietary impact of any changes in nutritional content or value.

DECISIONS ON GMO APPLICATIONS MADE BY NBA SINCE 2010

Status	Lab/Greenhouse Trials	Confined Field Trials	Import And Transit	Limited Open Cultivation
Approved	32	14	28	2
Withdrawn	0	0	2	0
Rejected	0	0	0	1
Pending	1	0	0	1
Total	33	14	30	4

FOCUS CROPS:

Several crops and animal-related biotechnologies are at different stages of development in Kenya. The listed crops have so far advanced to the confined field trial and/or environmental release stage.



Cotton



Sweet potato



Cassava



Sorghum (ABS)



Maize



Banana



Gypsophila flower

Environmental release:

- Bt cotton commercialized
- Bt maize Approved for National Performance Trials (NPT)

For more information, please contact:

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