

# **THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO'S STATUS WITH RESPECT TO BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOSAFETY**

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# **PRESENTATION OUTLINE**

- **INTRODUCTION**
- **THE CONTENTS OF THE DRAFT LAW ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**
- **THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE DRAFT LAW ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND SAFETY**
- **SOME RECOMMANDATIONS**



# INTRODUCTION

- **The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the signatories to several International instruments relating to biodiversity, biotechnology and biosafety:**
- **Some of these instruments are:**
- **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and**
- **The Cartagena Protocol signed by the DRC in February 2005**



## INTRODUCTION (continued)

- ***Main Objective of the CARTAGENA PROTOCOL was:***
  - **to ensure the safety transfer, manipulation and utilisation of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and derived products, in order to avoid health hazards to human beings, animals and biodiversity which may be caused by modern biotechnologies;**



## **INTRODUCTION (continued)**

- In order to meet her international obligations in regard to the Cartagena Protocol, *the DRC Ministry of Environment, Wildlife Conservation and Tourism* in collaboration with the United National Programme for Environment (UNPE) initiated a draft law on biotechnology and biosafety in August 2007. The draft was submitted the same year for consideration by the Parliament (National Assembly and the Senate)**



# **CONTENTS OF THE DRAFT LAW ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOSAFETY**

- **The draft law on biotechnology and biosafety which can be consulted on line :**
  - **comprises 58 Articles regulating not only the safe use and manipulation of GMOs and derived products at the national level but also the procedures for GMOs imports, exports , commercialisation and trans-border transit;**



## **CONTENTS OF THE DRAFT LAW ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOSAFETY (continued)**

- **the draft law also deals with GMOs risk evaluation and compensation of damage caused through their abusive use;**

**For those interested, the draft law can be found online under the French title of “ *Development d’un cadre National de Biosecurite*” – “*The development of Biosafety National Framework*”**



## **CURRENT STATUS OF THE DRAFT LAW ON BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOSAFETY**

- To date, that is nearly 7 years after the draft law was submitted to the Parliamentarian Commission in charge of environmental matters, there is no indication that it will even be considered for discussion at the next parliamentarian session which opens in September;**





## **SOME RECOMMANDATIONS**

- **And because there is no apparent reasons to justify the stand still situation, we think that congolese politicians on the shoulders of whom rests the final decision, should speed up the process of adopting the drafl law on biotechnology and biosafety, in order to not only protect the population against the GMOs risks but also to honor the country's internatioinal obligations.**



## **SOME RECOMMANDATIONS (continued)**

- **The use of several communication strategies, as highlighted by all the presenters in this workshop ( awareness workshops, discussion panels, provision of biosafety information on line and in hard copies), among others, seem to be for the moment, the best options of helping DRC parliamentarians become aware of the importance of adopting the current law on biotechnology and biosafety.**
- **The same strategies can also be used to sensitize various strata of the congolese population in regard to biodiversity and biosafety issues.**



# **SOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **(continued)**

- We, therefore, expect that through the implementation of the GMASSURE project action and activities, DRC stakeholders including politicians will be fully equipped with the necessary information and strategies to make well informed decisions with reference to GMOs, GM food and feed.**



- **THANK YOU VERY MUCH  
MERCI BEAUCOUP**
- **NGIYABONGA**