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Illegal Seeds and Regulatory Delinquency: Regulatory Vacuum in the Governance of Biotechnology in India

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Abstract

The recent controversy over the illegal and unapproved use of Bt brinjal in the fields of Maharashtra once again raises questions on the paradoxical nature of governance of Biotechnology in India. Most of the academic and policy literature on the regulation of biotechnology focuses on state institutions and procedure. After the introduction of Bt cotton in the late 1990s and the 'Bt brinjal controversy' on the commercial introduction of Bt Brinjal in mid 2000s, and recent controversy on the illegal cultivation of GM seeds and Kisan Satyagraha, biotechnology and life sciences have become contentious subjects in India. These three decades (1990-20120) represents a unique point in history in which India has tried to address different kinds of ethical, socio-political, legislative and administrative dilemmas related to agricultural biotechnology. In this context, this paper will explore the regulatory issues related with transgenic technologies in India.

Keywords: Biotechnology, GM Crops, Governance, Public Engagement, Civil Society, Agriculture, Bt Brinjal.

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