



July 14th, 2023

THE G6 WELCOME THE PROPOSAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO BASE REGULATION AND USE OF NEW GENOMIC TECHNIQUES IN CROPS ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

On 5 July 2023, the European Commission has proposed a major revision of the regulation and use of plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques (NGT). The signing six major research-performing organisations of the G6 network very much welcome this proposal for a legal framework based primarily on state-of-the-art scientific evidence. A new regulation of plants generated through targeted mutagenesis, cisgenesis and intragenesis will allow for research, development and use of novel technologies urgently required to address the major challenges for the climate, environment, and industry in Europe and beyond.

Apart from allowing the faster and more efficient improvement of crops, the proposed regulation has the potential to enable major breakthroughs in European research with respect to optimizing plants for agriculture, forestry, and many other bioeconomy applications. It will make an essential contribution to achieve the policy goals of the European Green Deal. Opening the regulation in the presented direction will enable researchers and breeders in Europe to contribute to sustainable agriculture and forestry by providing crops that allow reducing negative effects on the environment and climate as well as adapting agricultural and forestry production systems to present and future challenges and demands.

We specifically support a science-based risk-benefit approach to categorizing genetic changes based on their potential impact. Therefore, the proposed regulation based on two categories is a good way forward. However, some of the proposed criteria for categorizing crops still need to be discussed in view of further scientific evidence. For instance, the proposed ban of using NGT crops for organic farming would exclude this growing sector of agriculture in Europe from a significant innovation route.

The scientific experts of the G6 network are open to discuss the legislative proposal with European policy-makers and would like to deliver the scientific evidence that will be required in the forthcoming political debate.

The G6 network unites six large multidisciplinary European Research Performing Organisations with a total annual budget of 15.6 billion euros and over 140,000 employees: the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, the Helmholtz Association, the Leibniz Association, and the Max Planck Society.