

GM crops

risk analysis

assessment and evaluation protocols

For developing countries that have established regulatory frameworks and have already granted approval for commercial cultivation of GM crops, the need is for careful monitoring and evaluation of the economic and biological outcomes. For those countries still considering their options, their policy on GM needs to be informed by a careful analysis of the benefits and risks. They require evaluation protocols and an assessment of the capacity required for proper risk analysis, field testing and subsequent monitoring and regulation.



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For further information

Course leader

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Crop plants improved through genetic modification (GM) offer potential benefits to producers and consumers including enhanced agronomic, nutritional and marketing qualities. Although transgenic biotechnology has the potential to benefit agriculture in both the developed and developing world greatly, it also raises important concerns for the farming community and society at large, about the impact of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on human health and on biodiversity.



This three week course is run by staff based at the Natural Resources Institute and Law Department of the University of Greenwich to provide independent advice on regulatory issues concerning the introduction of GM plants from Importation, Containment, and Testing to Release. The course goes through knowledge building in these areas followed by case studies to put the knowledge into practice, and highlights suitable strategies to ensure safe and sustainable use of GM crops.

Course content

- Introduction to transgenic technologies
- Introduction to GM and Biosafety issues
- International legal and regulatory background to GMOs
- Examining international trade rules
- National legal framework for GMOs
- Analysis of current and draft legislation
- Regulating GMOs
- Action points on legislation for GMOs
- Risk assessment for release of GMOs
- Environmental risks: outcrossing, invasiveness
- Containment facilities
- Quarantine glasshouses
- Testing for GM contamination
- Procedures for release of approved GMOs
- Introductory aerobiology
- Pollen dispersal
- Case studies of suitability of GM Crops to target countries.
- Risks & Opportunities offered by GM technology for African countries
- Experiences with development and deployment of GM crops
- GM Food safety

Course personnel

Dr Robert Black

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Reader in Biosecurity Law and Risk Assessment, and Programme Leader for LLM in Biosecurity and Trade. Experience in drafting national legislation including GMO laws.



Dr Susan Seal

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Molecular biologist with 15 years research experience on nucleic acid diagnostics for developing countries. Experience in assessing the suitability of transgenic crops for developing countries.



Dr Linda Nicolaidis

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Specialist in EU food law, and Programme leader for MSc course in Food Safety and Quality Management.



Dr Rory Hillocks

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Integrated crop management specialist, and expert in design and implementation of sustainable agricultural systems for smallholders in Africa.



Dr Peter Burt

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Biometeorologist with 20 years experience working in the field of biometeorology, with emphasis on investigations of micro- and meso-scale dispersal of pests, disease pathogens and pollens.



Dr Lawrence Kenyon

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Plant Pathologist with expertise in plant and pathogen containment, and quarantine glasshouses.

