

OPINION

Reconsideration of GMO Bill good move

President Yoweri Museveni has declined to assent to the National Biotechnology and Biosafety Act, 2012, and instead asked Parliament to revisit a number of the Bill's clauses. In all, the President wants seven clauses reconsidered specifically to address the issues of protection of consumers, the indigenous crops and animals.

The National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill, was approved by the Parliament in October to pave way for introduction of GMOs. The Bill sets up a regulatory framework to facilitate the safe development and application of biotechnology. It provides for the development and general release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). However, the President observes that in its current form, the Bill poses a danger to the country's future. The President raises pertinent issues that have prompted him to send the Bill back to Parliament.

The President raises issue of the ancient crops and livestock with unique genetic configuration, such as Millet, Sorghum, beans, Ankole cattle, *enkoromojo* cattle and Ugandan chicken. The President notes that the Bill doesn't recognize the communities that have developed these original materials (crops or livestock) over centuries as it does for the scientists who, through genetic engineering, develop the same crops/livestock. The President raises the safety of indigenous seeds and says the genetically modified seeds should never be randomly mixed with indigenous seed. He wants the law, to prohibit cross-pollination between the GMO seeds and indigenous seeds.

The President further wants the law to prohibit the use of poisons and dangerous bacteria as the inputs in genetic engineering. He also wants the law to require all GMO products to be labeled.

Worldwide, introduction of GMOs has been very contentious. Uganda is among the handful of African countries, which are taking steps to introduce the GMOs. South Africa has introduced GMO food crops in Africa. The President's directive for reconsideration of the Bill is therefore understandable. This is globally a sensitive issue and we must ensure that strong safeguards, entrenched by law, are put in place before the GMOs are introduced in Uganda.

Happy New Year to all Ugandans.

New Vision

Editorial Tel: 0414 -337000/337139
 P.O. Box 9815 Fax: 0414-235843, Kampala.
 E-mail: news@newvision.co.ug
 Marketing/Advertising Tel: 0414-337-000
 Fax: 0414 -232050
 E-mail: advertising@newvision.co.ug
 Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC), Company listed on the Uganda Securities Exchange

www.newvision.co.ug



Gwynne D. Assisted

Whenever I go to a whole family grand-child use to get to coral reefs. There are they have been bleached the next time that sea temperature range. Half of the world's coral the destruction continues re Australia's Great Barrier Reef last year. Global warming w coral reefs by 2050.

Prof. Madeleine van Oppen Institute of Marine Science is therefore good news. He hybrid coral animals and temperatures.

"It is a story of hope, and die and there's nothing we van Oppen said at Oxford her team presented their conference last week. Pec major interventions in the concedes, "but it's too late alone, given the pace at losing corals... It is only before the next heatwave

She calls what her team 'assisted evolution', but intense version of the species for thousands of team have been cross-l adapted to cooler water from warmer regions that can withstand the temperatures worldwide

They are also working live inside the coral a major source of food. water gets too warm the algae that bleach team member, Leela the algae through ei lab, selecting the m generation. The fin water at 31 degrees

The next step, ob coral animals and regulatory approval

