

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1323
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.07.2022

Genetic Engineering Approval Committee

1323. SHRI VELUSAMY P.:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) has advocated the interest of project developers with State Governments for genetically modified crops?
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of project developers who have implemented Genetically Modified (GM) crops without the mandatory clearance from GEAC;
- (d) whether the Ministry has received any complaints from the States in this regard;
- (e) the framework under which the Ministry is issuing NOC from GEAC when as per the Institution, agriculture is a State subject;
- (f) whether the Ministry has any scientific analysis regarding the further effects of GM seeds to protect the interest of the farmers; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) & (b): The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is the statutory committee constituted under the “Rules for the Manufacture, Use/Import/Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro Organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells (Rules, 1989)” framed under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Applications are considered by GEAC as per the provisions of the Rules, 1989 and amendments thereafter. Every set of application has specific form and pre-requisite documents along with recommendations, wherever needed.
- (c) to (e): Clearance of Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is mandatory for the environmental release of Genetically Modified (GM) crops. As per the “Rules 1989”, State/UT Biotechnology Coordination Committees and District Level Committees are responsible for monitoring instances of illegal cultivation of GM crops and taking appropriate action under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Chief Secretary of State/UT is the Chairperson for the State Biotechnology Coordination Committee (SBCC). Any complaints that come to the notice of GEAC secretariat are sent to the Chief Secretary.

For the consideration of any application related to confined field trials of Genetically Modified (GM) crops by GEAC, NOC from the State/UT Government is required.

- (f) & (g): Bt cotton is the only GM crop which has been approved for commercial cultivation in India. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) conducted study during (2012 -2015) on impact of Bt cotton on 2700 cotton growing farmers belonging to 18 major cotton growing districts of Maharashtra and it was observed that the average seed cotton yield increased after the adoption of Bt Cotton. Also, ICAR has done the feeding studies of Bt cotton on various animals viz., broiler chickens, lambs, cows and goat which was found to be safe.
