

Office of the President
of the Philippines
Malacañang

MEMORANDUM

TO : The Honorable
Secretary of Agriculture

The Honorable
The Secretary of Science and Technology

The Honorable
The Secretary of Health

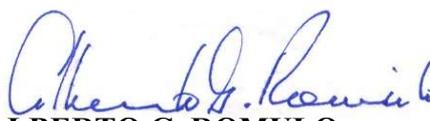
The Honorable
The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources

The Honorable
The Secretary of Trade and Industry

DATE : 16 July 2001

Please be informed that the President has approved the proposed Policy Statement on Modern Biotechnology as contained in the attached Memorandum dated 18 June 2001 of the Secretary of Agriculture, copy attached.

Accordingly, the President has instructed that the same be transmitted to you for your information, guidance and appropriate action.


ALBERTO G. ROMULO
Executive Secretary



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

18 June 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM : **The Secretary of Agriculture**

CC : **Secretary Angelito Sarmiento, OPAAM**
Secretary Victoria P. Garchitorena, PMS

Subject : **Draft Policy Statement on Modern Biotechnology**

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The Department of Agriculture proposes that the following Policy Statement on Modern Biotechnology be issued by the President:

Policy Statement on Modern Biotechnology

“We shall promote the safe and responsible use of modern biotechnology and its products as one of several means to achieve and sustain food security, equitable access to health services, sustainable and safe environment, and industry development.

“We shall ensure that all technologies that we promote, including modern biotechnology, will provide farmers and fisherfolks the opportunity to increase their over-all productivity and income; enhance the welfare of consumers; promote efficiency, competitiveness, and improved quality standards of local industries – all within the paramount objective of attaining safely and sustainable development, including its human, social and environmental aspects.

“The Departments of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Health, Environment and Natural Resources, Trade and Industry, and other concerned agencies are hereby directed to address the current issues associated with the local and global dimensions and trends of modern biotechnology, including its potential health, environmental and social impacts. Towards this end, they shall conduct public consultations with representatives from civil society, government and business; formulate departmental directives and regulations on the access to and use of the products of modern biotechnology, coordinate activities and programs on research, development and application; and allocate appropriate resources for the upgrading of capacities and capabilities to effectively regulate the technology and its products, including but not limited to product testing and labeling.”

Our recommendation is based on the following:

- (1) The afore-cited paragraphs were substantially agreed upon last May 29 by Secretaries Alabastro, Dayrit, Sarmiento, Deles and the undersigned, and by NEDA Deputy Director-General Llanto;
- (2) The said paragraphs cover the broad areas of discussion last May 25 between the DA and civil society groups/NGOs such as SEARICE, Philippine Peasant Institute (PPI), Mother Earth, MASIPAG, Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI), Green Peace, MODE, SIBAT, ANGOC, KAMMPIL, and the AVDF;
- (3) In the May 25 meeting, the NGOs opposed the background information contained in a previously prepared DA draft paper and incorporated in the draft PMS policy statement, both of which cite the positive claims and advantages of GMOs; and
- (4) The Policy Statement should be (a) a general statement that is neither restrictive nor permissive; (b) neutral and objective so as to balance the interests and concerns of all stakeholders; and (c) instructive, so as to guide government agencies in their work.


LEONARDO Q. MONTEMAYOR
Secretary