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Report Highlights:

The push for the move toward biotechnology in Cote d'Ivoire began in June of 2015, when the government of Cote d'Ivoire (GOCI) adopted and ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The following year, the GOCI advanced its GE agenda further by developing the country's first biotechnology law, which was approved by parliament in July of 2016.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the early stages of adopting the use of genetically engineered (GE) products, Cote d'Ivoire is progressing towards embracing agricultural biotechnology. This commitment was underscored in June 2015 when the Government of Cote d'Ivoire (GOCI) ratified the Cartagena Protocol, signaling the beginning of the country's transition toward biotechnology. Building on this momentum, the GOCI furthered its GE agenda by enacting Cote d'Ivoire's inaugural biosafety law.

Law 2016-553, which gained parliamentary approval in July 2016, delineates the necessary procedures for importing GE products into Cote d'Ivoire and designates various agencies responsible for ensuring the safety of imported products for human and animal consumption.

The perception of GE products among the general population in Cote d'Ivoire highlights a gap in educational outreach, particularly in rural areas, regarding the numerous benefits associated with GE products. The willingness of the Ivorian population to embrace innovative biotechnology tools and GE products would be likely dependent on the effectiveness of the GOCI in informing and educating the general public.

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CHAPTER 1: PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART A: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) RESEARCH AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Post is not aware of any GE product being researched or developed in the country.

b) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:

There is no commercial production of GE products in Cote d'Ivoire.

c) EXPORTS:

Not applicable.

d) IMPORTS:

Post does not have information regarding the current importation of GE products into Cote d'Ivoire. Nevertheless, there exists a biosafety law, Law 2016-553, approved by the Ivorian Parliament, outlining regulations for importing GE products. According to Article 23 of this law, the import of GE products is permissible, but it requires a formal request submitted to the National Biosafety and Biosecurity Commission (CNBIOS). However, it's important to highlight that CNBIOS is presently inactive, resulting in a prohibition of GE products from entering the country. In the future, once CNBIOS is operational and a request for authorization is made, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Environment (MOE). The MOE will then have a 90-day period to assess and decide whether the product can be allowed into the country. For the authorization of GE products, CNBIOS mandates the submission of the following information:

-Information on the taxonomy, ecological and reproductive behavior of the GE organism and its derived products,
-Details about the exporter, recipient organization, vector, and the introduced gene,
- Information regarding the risks associated with the transferred gene to other organisms, potential accidental dissemination, and the manner of usage.

All GE plants and their derived products are required to be adequately packaged and labeled. Specifically, the phrase "this product contains genetically modified organisms" should be visible on the product label or on an administrative document associated with the product.

Upon approval for entry into the country, GE products must undergo a quarantine period before they can be disseminated, commercialized, or used for other purposes. The specific duration of this quarantine period is not specified.

e) FOOD AID:

Cote d'Ivoire has been the recipient of U.S. food assistance under USDA's Food for Education program. There are no known cases where GE products have been imported for food assistance.

f) TRADE BARRIERS:

Cote d'Ivoire does not impose any trade barriers related to biotechnology, except for the requirements outlined in Law 2016-553.

PART B: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

In June 2015, the Government of Cote d'Ivoire ratified the Cartagena Protocol. Subsequently, in July 2016, parliament enacted Law 2016-553, focusing on the management of biosafety. The purpose of the law is to establish the biosafety legal framework aiming to facilitate the secure and efficient distribution of genetically engineered (GE) products across Cote d'Ivoire.

i.

Legal term (in official language)	**Legal term (in English)**	**Laws and Regulations where term is used**	**Legal Definition (in English)**
Organisme Génétiquement Modifié	Genetically Modified Organism abbreviated GMO	Law 2016-553 Article 3,4,8,11,12,14,18 to 27,32,34-36,38,41,46,49,50,52-53.	Any biological entity or organism whose genetic material has been altered through the use of modern biotechnology
Organisme Vivant Modifié	Living Modified Organism abbreviated LMO	Law 2016-553	Any GMO in its living form; capable of natural reproduction and propagation in the environment
Dissémination	Dissemination	Law 2016-553 Article: 3,14-16,24,26,29,32,46,49.	The release of a GMO or its derivatives into an environment other than the laboratory or the greenhouse.
Confinement	Containment	Law 2016-553 Article: 3,7,12,15,46	Any physical isolation through the use of appropriate equipment and facilities and/or biological isolation through the use of organisms whose ability

			to survive or reproduce in the environment is limited, in order to effectively restrict the contact of these Genetically Modified Organisms, abbreviated as GMOs or derived products, with the external environment and their impact on the environment
Biosécurité	Biosafety	Law 2016-553	Any measure aimed at avoiding risks arising from modern biotechnology on biological diversity, human and animal health, on the environment and on social activities and economic practices
biosûreté	Biosecurity	Law 2016-553	The technological and practical principles of containment put in place to avoid accidents and unintended exposure to pathogens or toxins
Biotechnologie moderne	Modern Biotechnology	Law 2016-553	a. The application of in vitro techniques to nucleic acids, including deoxyribonucleic acid, abbreviated as DNA, and the direct introduction of nucleic acids into cells or organelles b. Cell fusion of organisms that do not belong to the same taxonomic family, that overcome the natural barriers of reproductive physiology or

			recombination and that are not techniques used for conventional breeding and selection

ii. Responsible Institutions for Implementing the Biosafety Law (Law 2016-553):

The following institutions are mentioned in the biosafety law but Post is not aware that these institutions have become operational yet.

The key institutions tasked with the implementing the biosafety law are:
- The National Biosafety and Biosecurity Commission (CNBIOS)
- The National Biosafety Observatory (ONBIOS)

iii. Role of the CNBIOS and ONBIOS:

In Côte d'Ivoire, the CNBIOS serves as the designated authority for overseeing biotechnology. The CNBIOS assesses requests for GE product authorization and issues a verdict on whether the product can be imported into the country, relying on scientific substantiation. The CNBIOS aims to make determinations regarding GE products within a 90-day timeframe from the date of the authorization request.

In the course of the review process, CNBIOS will undertake the following actions:
- Request notification of transboundary movements involving GE products.
- Seek additional information from the notifier, if necessary.
- Address appeals on decisions from exporting Parties or the notifier.
- Engage in consultations with the notifier concerning confidential information.

The ONBIOS is an independent body designated to:
- Participate in public debates;
- Ensure transparency in the monitoring and evaluation of GE-related issues;
- Encourage informed public participation in decision-making process.

iv Assessment of Political Factors:

The objective of the biosafety law is to establish a sufficient level of safety for GE products in Cote d'Ivoire. In formulating a comprehensive policy, the GOCI considered the following elements:
- Ensuring the safety of the products.
- Safeguarding the environment and biodiversity.
- Assessing compatibility with application and ethical values.
- Ensuring alignment of the biosafety law with regional and sub-regional integration instruments, such as the ECOWAS biotechnology policy.

v. Any Regulatory Distinctions between GE plants containing DNA and those who do not:

There is no distinction between GE plant products containing DNA and those that do not.

vi. Any Regulatory Distinctions between GE plants considered living versus non-living:

There is no distinction between GE plants considered living versus non-living.

vii. Any Regulatory Distinctions between regulatory approval/authorization and environmental release:

Approval from CNBIOS is mandatory for utilizing GE plant or derived products in Cote d'Ivoire. The specific criteria for authorizing GE products were established by a decree from the Council of Ministers.

In certain circumstances, the MOE might request the applicant or recipient to adjust dissemination conditions. If deemed necessary, The MOE can suspend or withdraw approvals if necessary.

viii. Pending legislation or regulations that have the potential to affect U.S. exports:

According to Article 26 of Law 2016-553, "Any GMO or its derivatives must undergo quarantine before dissemination, commercialization or any other use". Presently, the duration of the quarantine for GE products has not been specified.

ix. Timeline for Approvals:

Upon submission of an import request to the CNBIOS, the MOE is obligated to provide a response within 90 days after receiving the notification. The MOE has the option to inform the applicant of an additional 60-day extension to facilitate the approval process. If the MOE fails to respond within the initial 90-day period, the application is declined.

x. Regulations on Biosafety:

The biosafety law was enacted in July 2016 with the objective of guaranteeing a sufficient level of safeguarding for human and animal health, biodiversity, and the environment against potential risks linked to the application of biotechnology and its resultant products.

xi. Additional product and/or seed registration:

No additional registration processes are required for GE products or seeds.

xii. Is re-registration required?

Re-registration is not required; however, the MOE must be informed of any changes regarding the release of GE products to protect human health and the environment.

xiii. Are approvals/authorizations limited?

There are no limits to the number of approvals.

b) APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS:

At present, no GE crops (industrial crops, food crops, or feed) have been officially approved or registered in Cote d'Ivoire for open cultivation, import or export.

c) STACKED OR PYRAMIDED EVENT APPROVALS:

There are no additional approvals required for stacked or pyramided events.

d) FIELD TESTING:

Currently, Post is not aware of any ongoing field trials in Cote d'Ivoire. However, the country permits field testing if authorized by the competent authority. Confined field trials are categorized into four security levels based on the potential risk to human and animal health, as well as the environment.

For security levels 2 to 4, there is a necessity for stringent coordination and monitoring with the competent authority. On the other hand, for security level 1, only a certificate from CNBIOS indicating approval of the field trial is required.

e) INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES:

Law 2016-553 under article 3 stipulates that GE animals fall under the same regulations and guidelines as GE plants.

f) COEXISTENCE:

Law 2016-553 ensures the coexistence of GE and non-GE crops.

g) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY:

According to Law 2016-553, any genetically engineered (GE) products designated for deliberate release, import, or export must be properly packaged and labeled. Specifically, the phrase "this product contains genetically modified organisms" must be visibly displayed on either the product label or an accompanying document.

h) MONITORING AND TESTING:

The Ivorian Law 2016-553 does not stipulate any details on monitoring and testing for GE traits.

i) LOW LEVEL PRESENCE (LLP) POLICY:
There is no LLP policy.

j) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:

There are no additional regulatory requirements.

k) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):

All GE and derived products in Cote d'Ivoire can be marketed if authorized by the GOCI.

l) CARTAGENA PROTOCOL RATIFICATION:

Cote d'Ivoire adopted the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) in June 2015.

m) INTERNATIONAL TREATIES and FORUMS:

Cote d'Ivoire is member of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Trade Organization (WTO) and Codex Alimentarius.

n) RELATED ISSUES:

Not applicable.

PART C: MARKETING

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS:

Biotechnology in Cote d'Ivoire is just starting to take hold therefor public and private opinions about the adoption of GE products hasn't been developed.

b) MARKET ACCEPTANCE/STUDIES:

Post is not aware of any market studies in Cote d'Ivoire.

CHAPTER 2: ANIMAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART D: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) RESEARCH AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Post is not aware of the development of bioengineered animal products in Cote d'Ivoire.

b) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:

Not applicable.

c) EXPORTS:

Not applicable.

d) IMPORTS:

There are no differences between animal and plant biotechnology imports in Cote d'Ivoire.

e) TRADE BARRIERS:

Not applicable.

PART E: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

The regulatory framework is the same for plant biotechnology.

b) APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS:

Not applicable.

c) INNOVATIVE BIOTECHNOLOGIES:

Not applicable.

d) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY:

Not applicable.

e) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:

Not applicable.

f) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):

Not applicable.

g) INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND FORUMS:

Not applicable.

h) RELATED ISSUES:

Not applicable.

PART F: MARKETING

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS:

Not applicable.

b) MARKET ACCEPTANCE/STUDIES:

Not applicable.

CHAPTER 3: MICROBIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

PART G: PRODUCTION AND TRADE

a) COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION:

Not applicable.

b) EXPORTS:

Not applicable.

c) IMPORTS:

Not applicable.

d) TRADE BARRIERS:

Not applicable.

PART H: POLICY

a) REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

The regulatory framework is same as that of plant biotechnology.

b) APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS:

Would not be any different from that of plant biotechnology.

c) LABELING AND TRACEABILITY:

Same as that of plant biotechnology.

d) MONITORING AND TESTING:

Same as that of plant biotechnology.

e) ADDITIONAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS:

Same as that of plant biotechnology.

f) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):

Same as that of plant biotechnology.

g) RELATED ISSUES:

Not applicable.

PART F: MARKETING

a) PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPINIONS:

Not applicable.

b) MARKET ACCEPTANCE/STUDIES:

Not applicable.

Attachments:

No Attachments