

NOTIFICATION

Addendum

The following communication, dated 15 October 2003, has been received from Switzerland.

Products containing genetically modified organisms (GMO), such as seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, animal feedstuffs, foodstuffs, and live vaccines

This notice provides information on the present status of Switzerland's legislation on genetically modified organisms (GMO).

In accordance with the Swiss parliamentary procedure the proposal which had been subject to notification G/TBT/Notif.00/49 (amendment to the Federal Law on the Protection of the Environment (Gen-Lex)) was submitted to parliament in 2001.

In order to enhance the transparency and comprehensibility of the Swiss legislation on GMOs, the Committee for Science, Education and Culture (CSEC) of the National Council, in its pre-plenary reading, has decided to change the format. Instead of revising the Federal Law on the Protection of the Environment, including corresponding sectoral legislation, a (new) horizontal Federal Law relating to Non-human Gene Technology was created. Notwithstanding this change in approach, the content of the Law remained substantially unchanged. After extensive debate in both chambers of the parliament (National Council and Council of States) the Federal Law relating to Non-human Gene Technology (Gene Technology Law, GTL) was adopted on 21 March 2003 and is scheduled to enter into force on 01 January 2004.

The final document was published in the Swiss Official Journal on 1 April 2003 (BB1 2003 Nr. 12). It is also available for download on the following website:

German: <http://www.admin.ch/ch/d/ff/2003/2778.pdf>
French: <http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/ff/2003/2462.pdf>
Italian: <http://www.admin.ch/ch/i/ff/2003/2407.pdf>

An unofficial English translation can be obtained from the following website:

<http://www.umwelt-schweiz.ch/imperia/md/content/stobobio/biotech/17.pdf>

The provisions implementing the Federal Law relating to Non-human Gene Technology (Gene Technology Law, GTL) will be elaborated in the near future (2004/2005). They will, as appropriate, be subject to WTO notifications.
