

Cartagena Protocol and Beyond: Issues and Challenges in the Nigeria's Response to Biosafety

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Abstract : The reality of the new world economic order and the ever increasing importance of biotechnology in the global economy have necessitated the ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the recent promulgation of Biosafety Act in Nigeria 2015. The legal regimes are anchored on the need to create an enabling environment for the flourishing of bio-trade and also to ensure the safety of the environment and human health. This paper critically examines the legal framework on biosafety by taking a cursory look at its philosophical foundation, key issues and milestones. The paper argues that the extant laws, though a giant leap in the establishment of a legal framework on biosafety, it posits that the legal framework raises debate and controversy on the difficulties of risk assessment on biodiversity and human health, other challenges includes lack of sound institutional capacity and the regimes direction of a hybrid approach between environmental conservation and trade issues. The paper recommend the need for the country to do more in the area of stimulating awareness and establishment of a sound institutional capacity to enable the law ensure adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer, handling, and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in Nigeria.

Keywords : Cartagena protocol, biosafety, issues, challenges, biotrade, genetically modified organism (GMOs), environment

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