# COLOMBIA

Colombia was one of the key countries in the Cartagena Protocol negotiations and proceed with its ratification through Law 740 of 2002. By the GEF-BM project the country started its implementation and stablished the National Biosafety System that consist of regulations, designation of national competent authorities, lab facilities and The Technical Biosafety Committees.

Through Decree 4525 of 2005, The following authorities were designated as the national competent authorities in charge of authorizing the use of living modified organisms – (LMOs):"

- The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development in the case of LMOs, exclusively for their use in the environment.

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, through the Colombian Agricultural Institute -ICA- is the National Competent Authority in the case of LMOs, exclusively for agricultural, livestock, fishing, commercial and agro-industrial forest plantations.

- The Ministry of Health and Social Protection through the National Institute for the Surveillance of Medicines and Food - INVIMA, in the case of LMOs, for exclusive use in health or human nutrition.

The Supplementary Protocol of Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur was ratified by the Law 1926 of 2018.

The capacity building generated through national and international funds, allowed the country to have accredited laboratories for the detection and identification of LMOs and generated baseline information for the environmental aspects related to wild relatives of species of importance for food security in Colombia (such as rice and cassava), approximations for transgene detection in wild species (*Gossypium* sp.) gene flow research, among others. Additionally, the country was able to train professionals in risk assessment and risk management at a postgraduate level. Important efforts for public awareness and education have been done at different levels of society (students, scientist, government officials and civil society).

In the agricultural sector, the implementation of the protocol has generated a greater positive impact in the access to recombinant DNA technologies for crops such as corn, soybean, cotton, and ornamentals such as rose, carnation and gypsophila with characteristics such as tolerance to herbicides, resistance to insects, changes in the coloration of the flowers (blue), among others. Among the main aspects to be highlighted are the acquired and improved technical capacity to adequately carry out risk assessments, as well as the biosafety and monitoring plan that have allowed the approval of technologies that mitigate the effects that it may have on biodiversity and the human health.

In the human health and food sector, since its regulation in 2005, a total of 254 authorization requests have been processed for 167 different GMO events, which correspond to the following products: corn, soybeans, cotton, canola, beets, wheat and rice. In addition, the Ministry of Health and INVIMA participate in debates and analysisof other relevant biotechnological issues, including the authorization and use of GMOs in confined environments, regulatory processes for "off-patent" events, low-level presence policies (LLP) related to GMOs, genome editing, genetics. units, to name a few.

In 2010, Colombia incorporated the Biosafety issues in its National Biodiversity Action Plan and in 2018 The Supplementary Protocol of Nagoya - Kuala Lumpur was ratified by the Law 1926.

Overall, the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol in Colombia has been an evolving process over the past 20 years, with advances in biotechnology regulation, management of risks associated with LMOs, sharing information through the BCH and the incorporation of The Cartagena Protocol and biotechnology issues in the environmental politics and regulations whit and cross sectoral scope.