

# NBT Platform

## New Breeding Techniques Platform

The New Breeding Techniques (NBT) Platform is a coalition of SMEs, large industry representatives and members of prominent academic and research institutes which strives to bring clarity to the European debate on NBTs. Its aim is to provide policy makers and stakeholders with clear and precise information on NBTs and to generate awareness about their widespread benefits for the European economy and society as a whole.

In Europe, the plant and seed industry is a world leader in terms of innovation, representing a market value of approximately 8.6 billion euro in 2012. Due in part to the *de facto* moratorium on GMOs in the EU, European organisations have focused strongly on new plant breeding techniques. NBTs allow plant breeders to develop new plant varieties in a similar—but faster and more precise—manner to that of conventional breeding techniques, so as to remain competitive and innovative in the face of stringent legislation and divergent international regulatory systems.

The innovative nature of this industry, however, is seriously threatened by the fact that in some European Member States NBTs are being assimilated to the debate on GMOs. While plants resulting from the application of NBTs are in most cases indiscernible from those derived from conventional breeding, and thus differ significantly from GMOs, the EU institutions are still in the lengthy process of evaluating the applicability of the current GMO legislation to NBTs.

### Objectives

- 1) The New Breeding Techniques (NBT) Platform strives to achieve legal clarity on whether or not New Breeding Techniques should be defined as genetic modification ('GM').
- 2) The NBT Platform aims to have all NBTs - or as many techniques as possible - exempt from GM legislation (Directives 2001/18/EC and 1829/2003/EC).

The Platform intends to realise its objectives by introducing combined input from the scientific and business sectors within discussions at EU-level.

### General principles

- The NBT Platform is and acts independently from other organisations, as this is the prerequisite for being able to present independent and scientifically validated information on NBTs to stakeholders.
- The NBT Platform brings together members from business and science, and combines a strong scientifically based approach with realistic business possibilities.
- The NBT Platform focuses its attention externally, toward the interests of stakeholders that influence the interests of the Platform members - namely the European Commission, the Member States, and various Associations and NGOs.

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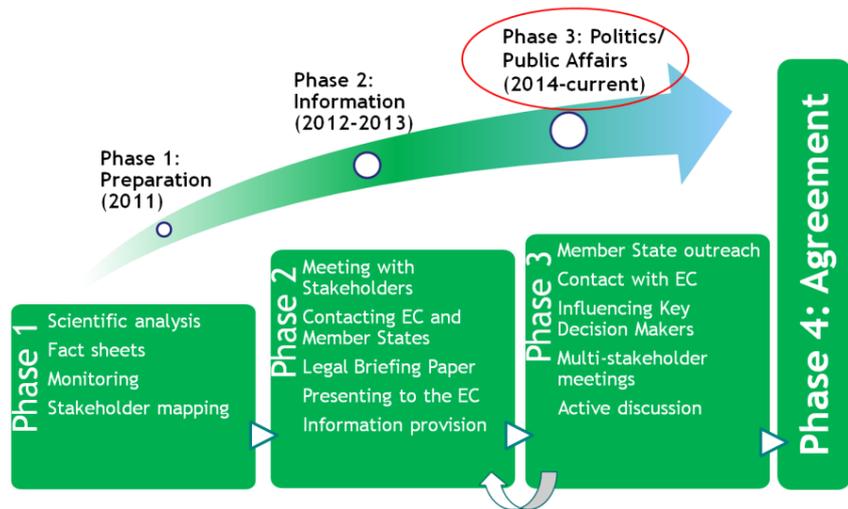
- The Platform is member-driven. The chairman/secretariat (Schuttelaar & Partners) reports to the members. Members inform the chairman/secretariat about relevant activities.

## Phases of the Platform

The phases of the Platform are shown in the figure on the right.

At the end of 2013, the Platform moved into the third phase, and will have an increasingly active approach towards the Member States, continuing to liaise and build support in

2015. To this end, in 2014 the Platform organised a multilateral meeting on legal argumentation and technical background of NBTs, which was attended by over 80 persons; representatives from 14 Member States, the European Commission, the JRC, industry, associations and academia. The focus of the Platform also expanded into analysing the legal implications of the revised Novel Foods Regulation and to monitoring activity on NBTs in the European Parliament. Additionally, studies into regulation outside the EU and socio-economic aspects were also conducted. External contact also focuses on relevant EU stakeholders, e.g. the OECD, and non-EU stakeholders influencing the debate, e.g. the US Agricultural Dept in light of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.



## Membership

All companies and academic institutions - be they large or small - with a legitimate interest in the availability of NBTs can become members. The NBT Platform aims to achieve a good balance between the different types of members. All members are treated equally; decisions and actions are established by consensus, each member having an equal vote. All members of the Platform must pay an annual fee according to their size and organisational nature, and fees are different for each category of members (SMEs: € 7.000,- / Large Companies: € 22.500,- / Scientific institutions: € 2.500,-). The fee represents commitment and covers expenses of the Secretariat.

## Interested in joining the NBT Platform?

If you are interested in joining the NBT Platform, or would like to receive additional information, please contact the Platform Secretariat at [info@nbtplatform.org](mailto:info@nbtplatform.org)