Bio Web

We give below a list of web sites providing interacting information on biotechnology and biosafety related issues.

http://www.nff.org.au/pages/sub/biotechnology_position.pdf
The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) from Australia issued a statement recognizing the potential of biotechnology, including gene technology as a valuable tool within agricultural production system. NFF advocates that producers should understand and assess potential risks associated with the technology and implement appropriate strategies to manage such risks.

http://www.nature.com/naturebiotechnology
Different categories for organisms currently designated as transgenic or genetically modified are intragenic (within genome), famigenic (species on the same family), linegenic (unrelated species), and xenogenic (laboratory-designed genes). The extent to which transgenic organisms differ from traditionally bred organisms underlines much of the controversy surrounding the use of GMOs. The proposed terms will hopefully permit a more precise communication of the sources of genetic variability used in gene technology-based breeding.

http://www.fao.org/biotech/index.asp
The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recognizes that genetic engineering has the potential to help increase production and productivity in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. There is concern about the potential risks posed by certain aspects of biotechnology. The benefits of crop biotech for agricultural productivity include better resistance to stress, more nutritious

staple foods, more productive farm animals for the environment, and more food from less land. GMOs reduce the environmental impact of food production and industrial processes, and help in rehabilitating damaged or less-fertile land. Benefits for human health are investigation of disease with genetic fingerprinting, vaccines, and medicines, and identification of allergenic genes.

http://www.jrc.es/gmoreview.pdf

The report by the EU funded Joint Research Centre (JRC) shows that European small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) scale down their researches, while large firms continue their research and commercialization of innovative agri-biotech products in other countries. The decline in the number of researches conducted is due to the 1999 decision of the EU Council of Environment Minister to block any new commercial release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The report focuses on cultivated GM plants used for seed, food, feed, industrial purposes, and medicine.

http://www.ahbfi.org/biotech/newscenter.asp

African scientists clarifies that the rejection of GM food by some African countries is not based on scientific data evidence of harm to human beings, animals or the environments. They assert that Southern African governments may not have consulted local scientists and communities and that their decisions to refuse GM food aid have been influenced by the anti-GM lobby groups. African scientists stand for the proper introduction of GM crops based on international protocols, and the responsible deployment of GM crops in Africa under the Global International Biosafety Protocol and National Biosafety Regulations and Guidelines.

http://www.usagnet.com

United States's Agriculture Department has constituted an advisory committee on biotechnology to study issues related to agriculture and genetically modified crops. Dr. Patricia Layton, a professor at the South Carolina-based Clemson University has been appointed as a chairman of the Agriculture Deparment's advisory committee.

www.biospherenz.com/download.biotech_taskforce_report.pdf
New Zealand's Biotechnology Taskforce has come out with a report commissioned by the New Zealand government, which considers large animal and plant biotechnology as core strength for the country. The major recommendations forwarded include the need to build critical mass; the introduction of a package of regulatory reform to create a competitive environment for growth; and the establishment of a robust international network to stimulate the flow of international investment.

http://www.searca.org/~bic
The Department of Agriculture (DA) in the Philippines stands firm in its decision to allow its planting of GM crops despite hunger strikers from non-government organizations protesting the commercialization of Bt corn. There was no sufficient scientific evidence to warrant a moratorium on the commercialization of Bt corn says DA.