

COUNTRY: PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

COMMITTEE: LEGAL

AGENDA ITEM: ETHICAL CONCERNS ABOUT GENETIC ENGINEERING

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Genetic engineering also known as genetic modification is the process of using laboratory based technologies to alter the DNA makeup of an organism. Also could be identified as the direct manipulation of DNA to alter an organisms characteristic in a particular way. The term "genetic engineering" was first coined by Jack Williamson in his science fiction novel Dragon's Island, published in 1951. After that Paul Berg who ushered in the era of genetic engineering in 1971 by successfully combining DNA from two different organisms creating the first recombinant DNA (rDNA). He won the 1980's Nobel Prize in Chemistry which he shared with Walter Gilbert and Fredrick Sanger.

Genome editing is prohibited by 96 countries out of 106 (October 20th 2020). That leads us delegates to a question: Why would countries prohibit such a method or so. The particular reason for the circumstance is that genome editing has some ethical issues since the day it was embraced to the public opinion. This actively demonstrates that people are scared about how dangerous it can be if this group of technologies (that give scientists the ability to change an organism's DNA) used in a harmful way.

To sum up everything that has been stated so far, we should check out the pros and cons of this innovation. Pros, it is been expressed that genetic engineering can be used for; fighting diseases, increase in living standards, decrease in the use of pesticides, development in specific characteristics. The cons are; religious and ethic concerns, health issues (allergies etc.), genetic issues, effects on wildlife, reduction in genetic variety, soil pollution, antibiotic resistance. Therefore even though genetic engineering has some good impacts in humanity as it was addressed it also has some controversial details about it.