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Governing Agrobiodiversity

Plant Genetics and Developing Countries

Regine Andersen, Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway

'...provides a fascinating account of the policy-making process related to agrobiodiversity. The analysis documents how the clash between access regulations, breeders' rights and patent rights has had adverse effects on the management of plant genetic resources in developing countries...makes a valuable contribution to the policy debate on the national and international management of agrobiodiversity.' – *Jean-Paul Chavas, University of Wisconsin, USA*

'The proliferation of overlapping international regimes poses new challenges for international governance. This study provides an extremely useful and timely overview of the complexity and negative aggregate effects of the regime constellation governing agrobiodiversity at the national level. This is a theoretically and empirically rich analysis, with direct policy relevance, which will stimulate much needed research into new forms of international environmental governance.' – *Philippe Le Prestre, Université Laval, Canada*

Plant genetic diversity is crucial to the breeding of food crops and is therefore a central precondition for food security. Diverse genetic resources provide the genetic traits required to deal with crop pests and diseases, as well as changing climate conditions. Plant genetic diversity is also essential for traditional small-scale farming, and is therefore an indispensable factor in the fight against poverty. However, the diversity of domesticated plant varieties is disappearing at an alarming rate while interest in the commercial use of genetic resources has increased in line with bio-technologies, followed by demands for intellectual property rights.

This important book contributes to our understanding of how international regimes affect the management of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in developing countries.

It identifies entry points to shape a better governance of agrobiodiversity and provides the first comprehensive analysis of how the international agreements pertaining to crop genetic resources affect the management of these vital resources for food security and poverty eradication in developing countries.

Contents: Preface; PART 1 INTRODUCTION: Relevance and objectives of the study; Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture: foundations of the topic. PART 2 RESEARCH DESIGN: Research questions and analytical framework; Research strategy and methods. PART 3 THE CONSTELLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL REGIMES PERTAINING TO PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: The international treaty on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture with the international undertaking on plant genetic resources; The convention on biological diversity; The agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights and the convention for the protection of new varieties of plants; Regime overlap, interaction and resulting constellations. PART 4 DOMESTIC RESPONSES TO THE INTERNATIONAL REGIME CONSTELLATION PERTAINING TO PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: Cases from The Philippines: Effects in The Philippines; Mechanisms of influence of international regimes: 2 cases. PART 5 CONCLUSIONS, RELEVANCE AND CHALLENGES: The aggregate effects of international regimes on PGRFA management in developing countries; Implications of the findings and challenges ahead; Bibliography; Interviews; Index.

Includes 6 figures and 33 tables

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