CRITICAL EATING:
GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - DESIGNING INTERNATIONAL BODIES ON RISK MANAGEMENT IN EVOLVING SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY WITH GLOBAL IMPACT

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Abstract

This thesis aims at providing insights on how to set up and design international decision-making bodies in evolving science and technology with global impact. It addresses the institutional side of growing concerns about participatory democracy while using the current debate over genetically engineered foods as means of exploring possible options.

The analysis focuses on how policy-advice on genetically engineered foods is structured, both on the domestic and international levels. Domestic efforts in Canada, the USA, and Europe are analyzed together with alternative instruments such as Consensus Conferences. For the international level, the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius, the U.S.-EU Consultative Forum, and the Biosafety Protocol are analyzed in depth. Since setting up and designing decision-making bodies in evolving science and technology has already been practiced on several issues and in various ways, this thesis also draws on past significant experiences with such bodies. Finally, this thesis identifies the crucial features of international bodies on risk management in evolving science & technology and applies the findings on the design of a future international panel on genetically engineered foods. Although the focus is on the issue of genetically engineered foods, the findings may be of broader application and be of value in future efforts to cope with issues of science, high technology, civil society and development within a globalizing, but nevertheless pluralistic and multicultural, world.

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