In spite of some clear technological advantages and widespread adoption, emerging technologies like GMOs continue to be defined by governance challenges in many regions around the globe. After more than two decades since the inception of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), controversy around its development and adoption continues to be common, but more importantly, institutional sustainability continues to be elusive.

In our research, we map and define peripheries in North America and Latin America and research how these jurisdictions have responded to ethical, political, social and biosafety challenges created by the introduction of these emerging technologies.

We argue that by looking at selected cases and comparing GMO governance in peripheral emerging and developed economies, analysts and policy-makers may be able to identify similarities that have so far been missed. Emerging technologies’ governance and biosafety norms need to be redesigned and reclassified along different lines. Through topical comparisons in the Americas, we conclude more profound considerations to local and regional conditions and a more open and fluid dialogue between periphery jurisdictions may help develop more robust social and biosafety governance solutions.

Keywords: GMO Governance, Biosafety, Sustainability, Institutional Development