

Council failed to reach improvement for GMO free food and farming

Organic movement demands EU wide moratorium for GMO cultivation

Brussels – 09/03/12 - The Council of Environment ministers today missed the chance to make a big step forwards for GMO free food and farming. Ministers were to adopt their opinion on the proposal of the European Parliament of last year to allow member states to restrict the cultivation of GMO on a reasonable list of grounds, adding a clause to the directive on deliberate release of GMOs that would additionally have obliged all member states to take up measures to prevent the presence of GMO traces in GMO-free food and farming.

“An opportunity for change has been missed today. GMO legislation in the EU still does not provide sufficient protection of farmers, processors and consumers from contamination. Therefore, the possibility for member states to ban the cultivation of GMOs on a **democratic basis**, but not as recently suggested on the basis of deals with the GMO industry behind closed doors, would have been a step into the right direction. Moreover, it is long time overdue that all member states would have to implement legislation to protect GMO-free food and farming, as suggested by the EU Parliament in 2011. ”

“The outstanding issues concerning GMO addressed by the Council in 2008 are far from being solved. The GMO-free food sector is still threatened by GMO contamination and faces enormous costs for the prevention of GMO contamination. This distorts competition in the food market at the expense of GMO-free producers and puts at risk that consumers have the choice for GMO-free products. As long as no legally binding rules are in place to prevent that GMO free food is contaminated with GMO traces, as long as those that put GMOs on the market do not have to pay for the costs and damage they cause, as long as the EU risk assessment and management of GMOs does not sufficiently address environmental, health related and socio-economic consequences of GMOs and the related farm practices, **a total ban of GMO cultivation and a moratorium on the authorizations of GMO in the EU seems to be the appropriate measure to maintain GMO free food**, as GMO free food is demanded by the majority of consumers.”

Notes:

- European Parliament legislative resolution on the Commission proposal to allow Member states to ban the cultivation of GMOs here: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/seance_pleniere/textes_adoptes/definitif/2011/07-05/0314/P7_TA%282011%290314_EN.pdf (for other languages search on: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegistreWeb/search/advanced.htm?relName=NUSE&reference=A7-0170/2011&language=EN>)
- See IFOAM EU comment to the EP vote: <http://www.ifoam-eu.org/media/2011/110705-PR-GMO-Lepage-report.pdf>
- IFOAM EU board declaration on GMO: http://www.ifoam-eu.org/news/pdf/IFOAMEU_GMfree_MaltaDeclaration_22.03.2010.pdf

Council Conclusions on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), 2912nd Environment Council meeting, Brussels, 4 December 2008 - http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/104509.pdf