Press release | 12.06.2014

GMO authorisation

Greek compromise is Trojan horse for GMOs in Europe

EU environment ministers meeting in Luxembourg today approved proposals for a new scheme for the authorisation of genetically-modified organisms. Commenting on the Environment Council, Green food safety spokesperson **Bart Staes** said:

“The compromise on revising the EU process for GMO authorisations, brokered by the Greek presidency and approved by environment ministers today, is a Trojan horse. It risks finally opening the door to genetically-modified organisms across Europe, in spite of mass public opposition. The Greens will use all means at our disposal to prevent this wrongheaded proposal from entering into force.

"The partial renationalisation of competences on GM cultivation, proposed by the Commission and endorsed by EU environment ministers today in a slightly modified form, is a totally flawed approach. It would enable the Commission to force through swifter and easier EU-level GMO authorisations by allowing member states or regions to opt out. However, there are major legal uncertainties. There are clear concerns that the opt-outs would not be legally sound and would be subject to legal challenges, leaving member states or regions isolated to defend their stance. There is also the clear and present danger of cross-contamination of crops, with the myriad of issues this poses.

"There is definitely a need to reform the EU's GMO authorisation process: we cannot persist with the current situation by which authorisations proceed in spite of flawed risk assessments and the consistent opposition of a majority of EU member states in Council. However, the answer of this cannot be to make authorisations easier. Any new approval procedure should not be a tool for the Commission and biotech-corporations to bully EU member states into accepting authorisations for GM crops for which legitimate concerns clearly exist. The EU should instead respect the precautionary principle and take account of the consistent and legitimate opposition to this controversial technology. At a time when American consumers and farmers are waking up to the negative consequences of biotech firms like Monsanto, Europe should not abandon the more sensible approach it has championed for decades."

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Opinion

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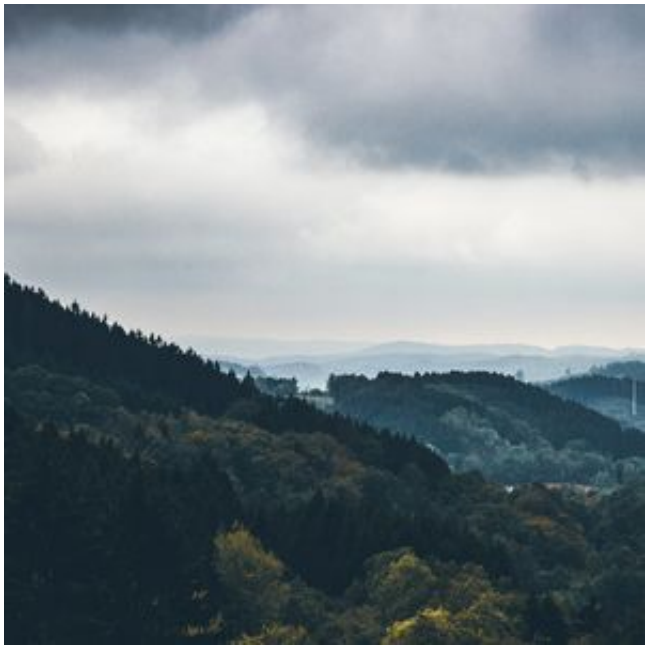


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Bart Staes

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