Press release | 06.11.2013

GMO authorisations

Commission bulldozing through genetically-modified maize in spite of concerns

The European Commission has today proposed authorising the cultivation of a new variety of genetically modified maize (1507, marketed as Herculex outside the EU) in the EU, which would be first GM maize to be approved in 15 years. The Greens have raised major concerns with the proposed authorisation of this crop, which has been genetically modified to produce a pesticide toxin targeting moths and butterflies and to withstand a herbicide. Commenting on the decision, Green MEP and vice chair of the EP's agriculture committee **José Bové** stated

"It is scandalous that the Commission is trying to bulldoze through the authorisation of this GM maize crop in spite of the massive opposition of EU citizens, as well as member state governments, to GMOs. The risks of this maize have not been properly assessed, with major gaps in safety testing. The Commission is ignoring very real concerns about the harmful impacts of GM maize 1507 on butterflies, which are essential pollinators, as well as the risks of cross-contamination of conventional and organic crops. The Commission should be heeding the concerns of EU consumers, farmers and civil society instead of aggressively pushing the agenda of biotech corporations to foist GMOs onto the EU market and into our fields. EU environment ministers should naturally reject this proposal when they consider it (1)."

Commenting on the wider implications for GMO authorisations in Europe, Green food safety and environment spokesperson **Bart Staes** said:

"Today's proposals to force through this GM maize should renew concerns about the dogged and ideology-driven pro-GMO agenda of the Commission in the context of the on-going debate on the EU's GMO authorisation process. 5 years ago, environment ministers called on the Commission to reform the EU's GMO authorisation process to take account of the consistently negative decisions in the EU's Council of Ministers on GMO approvals. The partial renationalisation of competences on GM cultivation, subsequently proposed by the Commission but stalled in the legislative process, must not be a trick to allow the Commission to force through swifter and easier EU level authorisations. This would be at total odds with public will. Any new approval procedure should not be a tool for the Commission to bully EU member states into accepting authorisations for GM crops for which legitimate concerns clearly exist."

(1) The Commission today proposed the approval of GM maize 1507. This will now be forwarded to the Council for EU member states to decide. If no decision is reached in Council, current EU rules enable the Commission to push ahead with the approval. The Commission also launched initial procedures on three

other products containing genetically modified maize.

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Opinion

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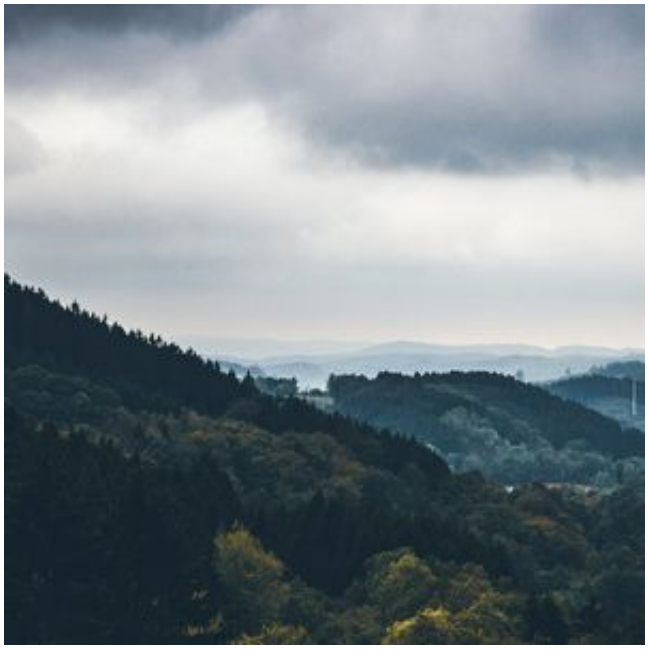


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José Bové

Member



Bart Staes

Member

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