Press release | 06.10.2016

GMOs

Commission must finally listen to the parliament on GMO approvals

MEPs voted today to object to a decision by the European Commission to authorise the cultivation of three genetically modified organisms in the EU, and the authorisation to import two (1).

Due to a lack of confidence in the Commission's authorisation process, a majority in the European Parliament has been consistently supporting Greens/EFA objections to the import of GMOs. Today's vote, which follows the rejection by the Environment committee on Monday, marks the first time that the parliament has voted against their cultivation, further highlighting how out of touch the Commission's decisions on GMOs have become.

Commenting after the vote, Green food safety spokesperson **Bart Staes** said:

"With a majority of Member States and the majority of EU citizens opposed to GMOs, today's vote shows there is undeniable EU opposition to both the import and cultivation of GMOs in the EU.

"The cultivation of genetically modified maize carries a high risk to the environment and to farmers, producing dangerous toxins in our soil, air and water. We have particular concerns regarding both EFSA's assessment of these GMOs, and the Commission's interpretation. All three set for cultivation produce the Bt toxin, enabling them to be "pest-resistant", but also making them a risk to protected and pollinating insects. But while EFSA has recommended at least 20 metres distance between MON 810 and Bt11 fields and protected areas, and 30 metres for 1507 maize, the European Commission is proposing distances of as little as five metres for the first two and 20 for 1507 maize.

"Further, EFSA has made their assessment without taking into account the occurrence of the invasive weed teosinte in Spain and France. Geneflow may cross to teosinte, causing it to produce Bt toxin, and confer higher fitness to the hybrids of maize and teosinte in comparison to the native teosinte plants. This scenario carries major risks for farmers and the environment. Their last minute opinion on teosinte, requested by the Commission and released last week, rests on a number of shaky assumptions but clearly underlines the lack of data. So it would be completely irresponsible for the Commission to push through the cultivation of new GMOs in the EU at a time when the scientific evaluation remains incomplete.

"The Greens have long argued that the authorisation process for GMOs is not fit for purpose and needs to be urgently overhauled. Until this happens, the only responsible approach is to place a moratorium on all GMO approvals, both for import and for cultivation."

(1) The five objections were to the following GMO crops:

- cultivation authorisation renewal of Monsanto GMO maize MON810
- cultivation authorisation Syngenta GMO maize Bt11
- cultivation authorisation Pioneer and Dow Agro Science GMO maize 1507
- import of authorisations of Dow Agro Science glyphosate resistant GMO cotton 281-24-236 × 3006-210-23 × MON 88913 (DAS-24236-5×DAS-21Ø23-5×MON-88913-8)
- import of authorisations of Monsanto GMO maize MON810

Recommended

Opinion

© Christian Kaufmann



Healthy food starts with healthy farming. Europe must …

04.11.2026

Press release

sebastian-johann



Commission launching an attack against nature

04.11.2026

Press release

Image by joakant from Pixabay



The World must triple efforts to save nature

29.10.2026

Press release



Conservatives and Social Democrats Put Jobs at Risk

22.10.2026

Responsible MEPs



Bart Staes

Member

Contact person



David Weir

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

Please share

- E-Mail