

Subject: EC Meeting: 1 December 2006: Discussion on GMOs

From: IAP <iap@twas.org>

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 2006 14:33:22 +0100

To: IAP <iap@twas.org>

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

Following an international symposium which took place in Berlin and an exchange of letters between the coordinator of the GMO initiative, Professor Hans Walter Heldt of the German Union and ourselves, our German friends propose a draft statement to be examined by the Executive Committee. Please find here attached the draft statement. Below please find a recent letter of YQ to H.W Heldt reproducing CZ's concerns about this Statement and other correspondence for your reference.

We believe that the scientific content of the draft statement is correct and that, most probably, something of this kind should be said by the Academies against the scientifically un-founded anti-GMO combat. But we wonder which form this "something" should take. Any comment from you will be welcome on this important issue and we will take a decision at the EC meeting on 1 December in Alexandria.

With best regards,

Yves Quere and Chen Zhu
IAP Co-Chairs

11 October 2006

Dear Hans Walter

Many thanks for these two reports which look very well documented and will be most useful for our further discussions. They are now being sent to the members of our Executive Committee.

Coming back to the Statement, I send you here a few recent comments from co-Chair Chen Zhu. He was recently at the Kyoto Forum and he has been impressed by the reluctance of several African countries, mainly about the problem of seeds which is an economic one rather than a scientific one. Here are his comments, as sent to me by Dr Wang Zhenyu.

We are now expecting comment from the members of our Executive Committee.

With very kind regards !

Yves Quere

1.Prof. Chen agrees with you that GMO could be defended in the sense that it is understood that natural crops also contain toxin and allergen, which can be risky to people, the assumption that non-GMO crops is 100% safe to human is not right.

2.Since the statement will try to explain a extreme controversial issue

within a rather short text, scientific evidence would be crucial for the acceptability of the statement.

3. Recent evidence shows that developing world, eg, Africa, is getting more and more concerned and remaining suspicious fo GMO technology, there are 6 African countries which have given respective GMO stances(see the attached). All those have shown the controversy and complexity of the issue, it might explain why upto now, there is no major international academic organization has issued a statement Pro-GMO like what IAP is now trying to work out. As a possible result of the issuing such statement, IAP will put itself in a serious position of being challenged or even oppugned. As Prof. Chen has mentioned in his previous email to you and Prof. Heldt, in order not to end up in such unpleasant result, it will be essential to have more external reviews from other institutions. In short, IAP shall be well prepared for upcoming challenges if it decides to issue such a statement on GMO as the current form. Prof. Chen would if possible suggest the other way around if IAP is reluctant to enter such situation, that is to ask the GMO initiative to produce a specific study report instead of a IAP positioning statement.

----- Original Message -----

From: HansWalterHeldt@aol.com

To: iap@twas.org ; y.quere@academie-sciences.fr ; zchen@cashq.ac.cn

Cc: ggottsc@gwdg.de ; hoenig@akademienunion-berlin.de

Sent: Saturday, October 07, 2006 9:54 AM

Subject: GMO initiative: 2 Reports

To the Co-chairs Prof. Queré and Prof. Chen Zhou.

Dear Colleagues,

In the attachment I send you the text of the final versions of two reports of the IAP GMO Initiative entitled "Are there health hazards for the consumer from eating genetically modified food?" and "Genetically modified insect resistant crops with regard to developing countries". The production of these reports together with the preparation of a proposal for a statement already submitted to the IAP, and the compilation of a data base of literature concerning GM crop plants was supported by a grant of the IAP. The two reports may be regarded as a basis for the proposed statement on genetically engineered crops in developing countries.

Drafts of the two reports have been formulated by the Commission of Green Biotechnology of the Union of German Academies, and were discussed and edited by the international Berlin Workshop May 26-27, 2006 and further edited by correspondence between members of the Berlin Workshop afterwards. Finally all participants of the Berlin Workshop endorsed the two reports by email.

As laid down in the original proposal for the IAP GMO initiative presented at the last IAP General Assembly in Mexico City, these texts are intended to counteract false arguments by environmental activists. The reports were written in such a way that they could be understood by decision makers and the public.

As stated in the 2005 working plan the two reports are to be considered as documents published under the sole responsibility of the GMO initiative and are now placed at the disposition of the IAP. For this we suggest the following:

a) They are included in the list of activities of the GMO Initiative in the home page of the IAP.

b) They are included in the folder of the meeting of the IAP General Assembly in Alexandria

c) They are transmitted by email to all IAP member academies. These may be encouraged to

distribute these documents in their own countries to decision makers and the public at their discretion.

With the presentation of the two reports, the submission of the proposal for a statement and the provision of the data base of literature about GMO crop plants we hope to have met the expectations of the IAP GMO initiative.

With best wishes

Hans W Heldt
Coordinator of the GMO Initiative

1 September 2006

Dear Sirs,

Here I submit the text of the "Statement on genetically modified crops in developing countries" to the IAP that it may be distributed to the member academies for endorsement. The document was formulated at the Berlin Workshop May 26-27 2006 and further edited by correspondence between members of the workshop afterwards. Today I shall send it also to the Co-chairs Prof. Queré and Prof. Chen Zhou.

A draft of the document was sent at an earlier date to Prof. Queré who kindly suggested some improvements in the document, with which we complied. You find the document in the attachment together with a list of the members of the Berlin Workshop group.

With best wishes

Hans W Heldt

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n.b. PLEASE NOTE THAT EXACT ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE TIMES ARE REQUIRED URGENTLY FOR CONFIRMATION OF HOTEL RESERVATIONS IN ALEXANDRIA. IF YOU HAVE NOT SENT THESE TO IAP, PLEASE DO SO. Deadline: 10 November 2006
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GMGeneFood.pdf	Content-Type: application/pdf Content-Encoding: base64
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InsectResistCrops.pdf	Content-Type: application/pdf Content-Encoding: base64
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Berlin Workshop Group.doc	Content-Type: application/msword Content-Encoding: base64
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GMOStatementdraft.doc	Content-Type: application/msword Content-Encoding: base64
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