

From: [REDACTED] (AGRI)
Sent: jeudi 7 novembre 2019 15:26
To: [REDACTED] (AGRI)
Subject: Report - Invitation | GENETIC INNOVATION vs CLIMATE CHANGE | BRUSSELS Tuesday 5th November 2019 - 6:15 pm European Parliament - Room ASP 3G2
Attachments: Programme.pdf; CIA Agricoltori italiani Bruxelles 5-11-19 SIGA.pdf; st11347-re03.en19.pdf

"Report of meeting

Goal of this seminar hosted by EP (De Castro/COMAGRI and Simona Bonafè/ COMENVI both S&D) was to **discuss opportunities and obstacles for crops obtained with New Breeding Techniques.**

Introduction: Paolo De Castro:

- Mentions potential of NBTs in solving many sustainability issues
- Emphasised need to avoid experience with GMOs, difference between mutagenesis (steered mutation; employs genes from same species) and other techniques involving the use of genes of other (e.g. animal) sources
- Deplored effects of Court ruling. **Need to change legislation.** CAP reform should also contribute

[REDACTED] Cia – farming organisation)

- Ideology should not hinder progress
- Pests destroy biodiversity, landscapes, economy (Xylella)
- Need to open road to provide farmers with more tools (besides machinery and chemical products)

[REDACTED] SIGA Italian Society of Agricultural Genetics/University of Perugia – academic) – presentation attached.

- Presents evolution of NBTs to make the point that GM is not the same as NBTs
- Climate challenge enormous: -16% in value of production by 2050 in EU and -80% in production Mediterranean area by 2100
- Court ruling: treats NBTs as GM. Moreover **can't trace certain NBTs** (certain changes made in NBTs can equally appear in nature)
- Solution is in Brussels: short term amend Directive 18/2001/EC (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02001L0018-20190726&qid=1573050954354&from=EN>) **to exclude from scope mutagenesis (new events since 2001)** and longer term rewrite with **focus on product and not technology (that is changing rapidly).**

[REDACTED] Cia and [REDACTED] – ASAJA Spanish Young Farmers Association)

- Need opportunities/access to innovation for SMEs
- Currently access reserved for bigger companies having strong investment capacities (was probably hinting to the fact that if certain NBTs get out of scope, **expensive procedures** such as necessary assessment for GM authorisation is not required)

- If no possibility to invest, innovation will go to US/China and we will be importing products (since not possible to detect)
- EU alone with strict legal regime of NBTs with Court ruling

[REDACTED] SANTE Unit responsible for biotechnology)

- Need to take step back: why GM sensitive? Because big companies involved, tolerance to herbicides sought
- COM today stuck: makes proposal based on scientific evidence, no opinion of MS, approves. At the same time many MS dependant on imports. EP regularly votes resolutions not to approve certain GMOs
- Court ruling: very legalistic based on precautionary principle: new mutagenesis events, though covered by Directive, not exempted like events before 2001 (that have safety record)
- Commission has to implement it, though very difficult since impossible to trace (and hence to label in line with legal obligation). SANTE in contact with e.g. EFSA to work out guidelines for risk assessment
- Latest event: Council voting in days to come on resolution calling on Commission (until April 2021) to make study on issue and legal proposals if appropriate (attached): Commission will need proof (e.g. on clima/environment benefits) to make case for NBTs.
- Will need to start the dialogue and the Commission is happy to listen.

Question and answer session

- Journalist: EU/national competences in prohibiting on-field trials? [R: MS competence based on EU framework]
- Green NGO: do third countries know of ruling and consequences on exports? [R: yes, WTO SPS] Is risk assessment not always better for citizens? Why exempt anything? [R: Costly and useless if something like conventional breeding safe anyway]
- [REDACTED] CIBE representing the "Agriculture & Progress Platform" <https://twitter.com/AgriProgress> in which sugar and maize businesses take part: calendar for amendment? [R: study until April next year (!) – NB: maybe a mistake since Council resolution speaks of 2021]

Closing remarks: Simona Bonafè MEP

- Cross-cutting issue with a lot of impacts

Internal: SANTE will set up Inter-service Group (timing to be clarified). Will probably require a lot of work from associated Commission services considering high stakes. My personal opinion is that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]