

By deregulating new GMOs, the European Commission goes against the will of its own citizens

Today, the European Commission published its new legislative proposal to deregulate new-generation GMOs, the so-called "New Genomic Techniques" (NGTs). PAN Europe considers that the "solutions" proposed by the industry through NGTs are merely wishful thinking. They are the same kind of deceptions as we observed earlier with conventional GMOs. The NGT patents that are in preparation are herbicide-resistant crops, which would lead to a huge increase in pesticide use. This proposal goes against the will of citizens and violates the precautionary principle. It is not in line with the European Green Deal's (EGD) promises. The new techniques will only benefit the seed industry, leaving farmers, citizens and the environment unprotected.

Angeliki Lysimachou, Head of Science and Policy at PAN Europe said: "The European Commission's stance is a deception towards its citizens. While publicly endorsing the EU Green Deal, which prioritizes pesticide reduction and agroecology, the Commission simultaneously pursues a plan to deregulate new GMOs that depend on pesticide use. This contradictory approach not only jeopardizes biodiversity but also undermines the very principles of agroecology. The new GMOs represent another polluting 'business as usual' mindset akin to Green Revolution 3.0"

Martin Dermine, PAN Europe's Executive Director continued: "By proposing to open the market to NGT crops, the European Commission will make its farmers even more dependent on the seed industry. New GMOs are patented and farmers will pay considerable amounts for the seeds, while agroecology principles promote farm independence, sharing seeds of locally adapted and resistant crops".

PAN Europe is extremely concerned as the proposal from the European Commission would lead to having on the market GMO crops allowed without assessing the impact of man-made mutations on citizens' health and the environment.

Martin Dermine added: "The biggest category of new GMOs that are in the pipeline of the seed industry are herbicide-tolerant crops. We have witnessed the humanitarian and environmental disasters that GMO crops have generated in Latin America. The Commission naively thinks that NGTs will solve drought issues but droughts are the consequence of industrial agriculture: greenhouse gas emissions by soil degradation and massive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Solutions can only be found in good agronomic practices to strongly reduce chemical inputs and increase soil organic matter "

PAN Europe considers that no single use of NGT crops proposed by the industry has added value for European Citizens. Agroecology is the only way forward to increase the resilience of European agriculture towards the challenges posed by climate change, food sovereignty and biodiversity.

Angeliki Lysimachou concluded: "The Commission is going against the interests of citizens and farmers themselves. NGTs mean maintaining an intensive system of agriculture, highly dependent on biotechnologies. Citizens have shown many times they simply do not want it, as was shown in the Save Bees and Farmers Citizens!. With this proposal, the European Commission shows once more they do not listen to the voice of citizens, which will lead to even more distrust in EU institutions".

Pesticide Action Network (PAN Europe) is a network of NGOs working to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and have them replaced with ecologically sound alternatives. We work to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. Our network brings together over 45 consumer, public health and environmental organisations and women's groups from across Europe.





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Press Release

Useful reading:

- NGO Press Release: [EU deregulates new GMOs in spectacular submission to the biotech industry](#)
- NGO Press Release: [‘Second-hand GE’ plants claimed as inventions](#) (Test Biotech)
- Letter: [Letter signed by 300 NGOs to Frans Timmermans to object to prevent the far-reaching deregulation of new genomic techniques at the expense of nature and the climate, and of farmers’ and consumers’ rights](#)

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