

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
 March 21st 2007 – afternoon (13.30-15.30)
 Tuscany Representative Office in Brussels

Report

Final: 30/03/2007

Participants:

Name	Region
Aitor Mintegui Etxaleku	Euskadi (ES)
Cinzia Turri	Sardegna (IT)
Claude Tremouille	Limousin (FR)
Emilie Fouché	Auvergne (FR) new member
Fabio Boscaleri	Toscana (IT) Notes
Ivana Stella	Umbria (IT)
Justin Amiot	Bretagne (FR)
Karine De Crescenzo	Ile de France (FR)
Katarina Bulic	Croatian Regions - Observer
Mathieu Simon	Ile de France (FR)
Michaela Petz	Salzburg (AT)
Orazio Cellini	Toscana (IT)
Paola Simone	Umbria (IT)
Renaud Layadi	Bretagne (FR)
Roberto Pagni	Toscana (IT) Chair
Stefan Palma	Prov. Aut. Bolzano (IT)
Stefano Coronati	Lazio (IT)
Stephen Jackson	Wales (UK)
Vincent Lacarce	Aquitaine (FR)
Caterina Ronco	Piemonte (IT)
Luisa Ricci	Piemonte (IT)

21 participants

**from 13 Member Regions
 (+1 future member+ 1 Observer)**

AGENDA

- A. 5th Network Conference: subject and contents; draft programme; invites
- B. Multilateral meeting with EU Commission services, 17-18 April 2007: update
- C. Presentation of first draft website
- D. 2006 activity report of the Network
- E. Brief communications from Working Groups' Leader.

A. 5th Network's Conference in Turin (17-18 May 2007)

The 5th Conference of the Network is confirmed for 17-18 May 2007 in Turin (Piemonte – Italy).

The Conference will follow this strategy:

Primary target of the Conference will be the enlargement of the debate on possible strategies to face the upcoming CAP reform, starting with a GM-free strategy for local and regional high quality agri-food productions.

Main themes will be:

- a) **coexistence**: possible way to recognize GMO-free areas with local legislation or agreements. During the Conference a presentation of new ideas to set up the coexistence could be introduced, as well as the seed and organic GMO contamination threshold question;
- b) **feed and seed**: GMO-free production chain and information to consumers – toward the GM-free feeding-stuff Conference;
- c) **biodiversity**: the role of Regions in preserving biodiversity, starting from agricultural biodiversity and local seeds protection

The Steering Committee drafted a first Programme ([ANNEX 1](#)).

The success of the Conference will mainly be based on the participation of political representatives from the Regions of the Network. For this reason every Network partners is requested to activate all the internal communication procedures in order to ensure the greatest political participation to the Conference.

A “save-the-date” document was distributed to the Network by Piemonte and Presidency on beginning of March ([ANNEX 2](#)).

The second indicator of success could reside in the capacity to create the basis for new initiatives and partnerships. For this reason this Conference will include a specific session open to external contribution.

Particular attention will be put on the collaboration with AREPO, the International Commission on the Future of Food, IFOAM, AER, CoR and MEPs more sensitive to GMO-free status.

A List of organisations to be invited is circulating among partner Regions in order to identify and contact every person that could add value to the Conference. **Partner Regions are strongly invited to improve that list** ([ANNEX 3](#)).

An “input paper” to support the programme, the invitation and a list of possible accommodation in Turin will be distributed by the Presidency and Piemonte Region by the first week of April.

A new General Assembly is scheduled to take place on April 18th in the afternoon, after the Multilateral meeting. The final documents will be officially presented to the Network during this event.

The following activity plan has been established:

Object	Responsible	Deadline
Input paper + 2 nd Draft Programme	Presidency + Working Groups	1 April
Accommodation in Turin (List of Hotel)	Piemonte	1 April
Official programme and invitations	Presidency + Piemonte	18 April
List of subjects to be invited	Steering Committee + Piemonte	18 April
Web pages of the Conference	Tuscany	18 April

B. Multilateral meeting with EU Commission services, 17-18 April 2007

The multilateral meeting aims at obtain and share information through a technical debate with representatives from different European Commission's services. Outcomes are expected to consist of

obtaining on an update about the initiatives (in progress and future) of the different DGs and giving a good impression of our organization.

This occasion represents a great opportunity for the network as it is probably the first time that several Commission's Services are together to exchange information with a regional network..

In order to the make best impression on the Services, only a selected delegation of the steering committee will participate in the meeting (regional experts and technicians).

After the meeting, a general assembly is scheduled (18 April afternoon) in order to share within the network all relevant information collected during the meeting.

A programme was drafted (ANNEX 4).

The Steering Committee created a list of topics on which single Regions has to prepare a short presentation with 2-3 questions to be submitted to the Commission Officers.

The topics were allocated according to the following scheme:

Commission service	Topic	Region in charge
DG AGRI	Coexistence – Mr. Leo Mayer	Aquitaine
	Research – Mr Leo Mayer	Lazio
	Organic farming – Mrs. Baillieux	Upper Austria
DG SANCO	Animal derived food and GMO labelling – Mrs. Schoboboda	Tuscany
DG ENV	Seeds contamination thresholds – Mrs. Rey Garcia	Umbria
	Revision of the legislative framework for the approval – Mrs Rey Garcia	ENAE
DG TRADE	Import of GM-free raw material – Mr. Ferriere	Bretagne
General Secretariat	Long term strategy on Biotech and GMOs – Mr. Mousnier	Bretagne, Tuscany, Wales

Responsibilities associated with each single topic include preparing a presentation and contributing to the list of questions by **April 2nd** to allow time to circulate the questions within the Network before a final list of topics and related questions are sent to the Commission **1 week before the meeting** (April 12th).

C. Presentation of first draft website

A first draft of website is online at the following address: <http://88.56.223.100:8080/servlet/ae5Ogm>.

This demo is only in English.

A provisional name for the website has been registered: www.gmofree-euregions.net . For the moment it's not active. Every partner region is invited to check the website and to send contents and suggestions.

D. 2006 activity report of the Network

The Steering Committee approved the document "2006 activity report". The document is now available (only EN) for free distribution as *pdf* file.

E. Brief Communications from Working Groups' Leader

WG 1 – Coexistence, Aquitaine

Following the agreement of a joint position on the coexistence, Aquitaine Region proposes to start considerations aimed at producing a document (probably a sort of guideline) on how to declare and recognize the regional territories as GM-free. Furthermore, other technical support measures to implement coexistence will be explored.

The next meeting should take place between the Multilateral meeting and the 5th Conference.

WG 4 – Research, Lazio

Lazio Region sent a letter in order to find out possible interested persons/Institutes to collaborate on some research subjects that were proposed to the WG by external organisms.

No reaction from other Regions of the Network was registered.

A reflection on the matter would seem necessary in view of the FP7.

WG 5 – International Cooperation, Bretagne

The WG is working hard on the organization of a meeting on the subject of GM-free soy supply from Brasil. The Meeting will take place in Brussels on 4-5 December 2007. It will be hosted by the Committee of Regions.

The WG meets frequently to carry on the project.

WG 6 – Seeds, Umbria

Following the first joint position, the WG will work on the new proposal by the European Commission for contamination thresholds in seeds. The work will be done in view of the multilateral meeting and the Conference in Turin.

WG 7 – Controls, Euskadi

The WG met for the first time at the end of 2006. The meeting saw a very low attendance.

Euskadi experts are working on a draft document in view of the Conference in Turin. A next WG meeting is expected before the Conference.

Annexes:

- 1) Annex 1: 5th Conference's Save the Date
- 2) Annex 2: 5th Conference 1st draft Programme
- 3) Annex 3: List of subject that could be invited to the 5th Conference
- 4) Annex 4: Multilateral meeting draft programme