

PLENARY ASSEMBLY
 February 24th 2006
 Tuscany Representative Office in Brussel

Main Outcomes

Participant to Plenary Assembly:

Name	Region / Organisation
Aitor Mintegui Etxaleku	Euskadi (E)
Anna Giglio	Limousin (FR)
Antonella Passarani	Marche (IT)
Athanassios Goumas	ENAE (GR)
Berenice Vincent	Aquitaine (FR)
Cinzia Turri	Sardegna (IT)
Claudia Mearini	Toscana (IT)
Fabio Boscaleri	Toscana (IT)
Filippo Crapanzano	Abruzzo (IT)
Justin Amiot	Bretagne/Pays de la Loire/Poitou-Charentes (FR)
Mathieu SIMON	Ile de France (FR)
Moira Andeanelli	Prov. Aut. Di Trento (IT)
Orazio Cellini	Toscana (IT)
Pawel Polanecki	Mazovia (P)
Renaud Layadi	Bretagne (FR)
Roberto Pagni	Toscana (IT)
Federico Rossi	Lazio (IT)
Sybille Diterich	Rhône-Alpes (FR)
Steven Jackson	Wales (UK)
Vesna Caminades	Bolzano (IT)
Vincent Lacarce	Aquitaine (FR)

Tot. 21part.

18 Regions

1) Vienna Conference

Network delegation

Organizers have reserved five seats to the Net delegation during the Conference (+ Susanna Cenni as speaker). It has been decided to divide them in this way:

Tuscany (Cenni's assistant), **Aquitaine**, **ENAE**, **Euskadi** and **Wales**.

Upper Austria will make part of the national Austrian delegation. Possible new places could get rid if some regions joined national delegations. Other Regions asked to participate: **Bretagne**, **Lazio**, **Bolzano/Sudtirolo** and **Limousin**. In case a place got rid will be given the precedence to the **Bretagne** because it took care of the informative booklet for the Conference.

Cenni's speech

Net intervention will be centralized on the topic of the co-existence following the document produced in *Rennes*. Tuscany will write up a rough draft that will be sent to the steering committee after 10 March (when a report on the application of co-existence will be issued by EC).

NET informative material

Bretagne will take care of the realization of a Net informative leaflet (approximately 12 pages). This document will be distributed during *Vienna* Conference.

English, French, Italian and German copies will be realized (translations will be edited by **Tuscany, Bretagne, Upper Austria** and **Wales**).

Collaboration with the Assembly of European Regions (AER)

The AER has manifested the will to be represented by the Net during Vienna Conference.

The **steering committee** decided to estimate possible agreements with AER to allow such partnership. *Renaud Layadi* has been charged (together with *Roberto Pagni*) to verify and to find out possible agreements with *Agnes Ciccarone* of AER.

The agreement has been found on the basis of a collaboration (AER – GMO-free Net) to jointly organize 4 events on different subjects to be carried out during 2006 and 2007.

Tuscany informed the Conference's organizers that Assessore Cenni will speak as:

Coordinator of the GMO-free European Regions and Local Authorities' Network
Tuscany Minister for Agriculture
Member of Assembly of European Regions (AER)

2) Network's organization and promotion

- a) **Tuscany** illustrated its proposal, introducing two hypothesis: the first one (under shape of adhesion to an agreement protocol/code) would demand exclusively the acknowledgment of common objectives, leaving organizational issues completely free for the Net.

The second one (with the subscription of a status - and consequently of specific regulations), would define more in detail the structure and the organs of the Network and its operative modalities, foreseeing several levels of adhesion for the Regions members.

Steering Committee asked more time in order to analyse the proposal, that will be newly discussed during the next fixed meeting of the steering committee that will be take place on 27 April 2006 in Brussels.

- b) **Steering committee** has been informed that Tuscany Region will take care of the production of a Net's web site. A first step to define this web site is the definition of an official name in order to record it in internet.

A document will be sent to partner Regions to stimulate the inventiveness and to try to define a name before Vienna. The proposed hypothesis was an acronym that accompanies the name nowadays known from everybody: *Network of the GMO-Free European Regions and Local Authorities*.

With the purpose to define the name, a document will be sent from Tuscany as soon as possible.

3) Future Initiatives

ENAE proposed to organize in Greece the 5th Conference of the Net in the next winter.

Lazio Region will arrange a new meeting of the working group 4 during the next spring.

Tuscany wants to promote encounter between Net and International Commission for the Future of the Food and Agriculture (being involved the AREPO) in June 2006.

4) Meeting with COPA-COGECA (23 feb. – 15h)

Meeting between Steering Committee and General Secretary Dr. Feiter with the Unit Chief Mrs.Feller (charged of GMO dossier).

Objectives :

- to start up first contact and dialogue with the maximum expression of the professional agricultural organizations in Europe;
- to introduce Net's position, particularly on the co-existence, with an exchange of points of view on the related topic;
- to start up possible future synergies, also in view of the Vienna Conference.

Main considerations:

- COPA-COGECA shares Net's consideration on the basic problematic deriving from the lack of homogenous and clear rules in European territories, particularly on the aspect of the responsibilities, on which COPA is aligned on the net position regarding the application of the "polluter pays principle";
- COPA-COGECA shares Net's consideration on the lack researches on socio-economic impact derived from the introduction of GMOs;
- COPA-COGECA consider also problematic the authorization process. However, they think that present process must be maintained because of the benefits to decisional level (in any case a final decision is foreseen);
- We have a different position regarding the level of contamination in seeds and agriculture products. The threshold proposed by Commission (0.9%) must be assessed taking into account the real feasibility of survey in the production chain. In any case it does not have to fall back neither from the economic point of view, neither from the point of view of responsibility on the farmers. Practically, for the COPA-COGECA it's difficult to ask for a contamination threshold equal to "technical zero".
- COPA-COGECA assures the support to entire GMO-free Regions only in case that it's the will of every stakeholder in this Region (e.g. in case of voluntary agreements).

Total appreciation to the meeting from part of the COPA-COGECA that manifested the availability to continue a constructive dialogue also on specific aspects (e.g. on the subject of seed purity) through the activity of its specific committees.

5) Meeting with DG AGRI (23 feb – 17h)

Meeting between **Tuscany, Wales, Aquitaine, Bretagne** and Mr. *Leo MAIER* (Unit Head) with his collaborators: *Gumbert* and *Raes*.

Objectives:

- to illustrate and to promote Net's document on the co-existence

Leo Maier repeated that the "co-existence" problematic must still carefully be estimated because of its complexity, taking into account that the GMO are authorized and that the European Union must respect the WTO rules.

- to obtain additional information on Vienna Conference

Approximately 750 representatives from 150 Institutions (agencies, associations etc.). The Conference will give the Commission the different point of view from various stakeholders involved in the topic of co-existence. An intervention has been reserved to the Net in the parallel session "A" (5 April afternoon). Following the conference a possible revision of the coexistence legislative framework could be considered. The Commission is going to release a dossier on the state of application of the co-existence rules in every MS (probably on 10 March).

- to participate to the works of the COEXNET European initiative

A possible participation of a Net's representatives will be estimated by DG AGRI.

6) Meeting with Friends of the Earth Europe (Ms. Helen Holder)

Tuscany, Bretagne and **Aquitaine** met Helen Holder (FoTE Europe) in the afternoon of 22 February 2006. Assessment of respective positions in view of Vienna Conference, mainly speaking about coexistence and tolerance thresholds.

FoTE is making meeting with several participants to Vienna Conference (e.g. English GDO, organic organization, etc.) in order to make speakers more sensitive on some critical aspects, trying to create convergences.

FoTE will organize a parallel demonstration, with Austrian farmers organization. Regions of the Network have been invited to such initiative.