

GMO-FREE EUROPEAN REGIONS NETWORK

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

April 17th 2007 - Afternoon

Tuscany Representative Office in Brussels

REPORT

(23 April 2007)

Participants:

Name	Region
Aitor Mintegui Etxaleku	Euskadi (ES)
Alessandra Bianchi	Lazio (IT)
Athanassios Goumas	ENAE (GR)
B�erence Vincent	Aquitaine (FR)
Claudia Mearini	Toscana (IT)
Fabio Boscaleri	Toscana (IT) Notes
Gerald Lonauer	Ober�sterreich (AT)
Inaxio Aljvacil	Euskadi (ES)
Ivana Stella	Umbria (IT)
Justin Amiot	Bretagne (FR)
Natale Bazzanti	Toscana (IT)
Orazio Cellini	Toscana (IT)
Paola Simone	Umbria (IT)
Renaud Layadi	Bretagne (FR)
Riccardo Russo	Toscana (IT)
Roberto Pagni	Toscana (IT) Chair
Stefano Coronati	Lazio (IT)
Vincent Lacarce	Aquitaine (FR)

18 participants

from 8 Regions

AGENDA

- A. Multilateral meeting with EU Commission services: last orientation and input.
- B. 5th Network Conference: an update.
- C. Name of the Network: last assessment before the adoption.
- D. Organizational aspects to be discussed during the 5th Conference.
- E. Implementation of the website.
- F. AOB.

OUTCOMES

Works start at 4.15 pm

Due to the necessity to set up the video presentation for the Multilateral meeting, **only the point A of the agenda is discussed**. The final presentation is available on the website of the Network.

The SC decides to postpone the discussion about point B and D at the following day during the Assembly. Points C, E and F are not discussed.

Works end at 7.15 pm

GMO-FREE EUROPEAN REGIONS NETWORK

ASSEMBLY MEETING
April 18th 2007 - Afternoon
Tuscany Representative Office in Brussels

REPORT (23 April 2007)

Participants:

Name	Region
Aitor Mintegui Etxaleku	Euskadi (ES)
Anna Giglio	Auvergne – Centre – Limousin (FR)
Athanassios Goumas	ENAE (GR)
Azucena Salazar	Euskadi (ES)
Bérénice Vincent	Aquitaine (FR)
Claudia Mearini	Toscana (IT)
Daniel Frasnelli	Alto Adige/Sudtyrol (IT)
Emilie Fouché	Auvergne (FR)
Fabio Boscaleri	Toscana (IT) Notes
Florian Weiler	Tyrol (AT)
Gerald Lonauer	Oberösterreich (AT)
Inaxio Aljvacil	Euskadi (ES)
Justin Amiot	Bretagne – Pays de la Loire – Poitou-Charentes (FR)
Katarina Bulic	Croatian Regions
Laura Piche	Midi-Pyrénées
Marco Monachesi	Marche (IT)
Natale Bazzanti	Toscana (IT)
Nevenka Krklec	Varadzdin County (Croatia)
Orazio Cellini	Toscana (IT)
Pascale Loget	Bretagne (FR)
Renaud Layadi	Bretagne (FR)
Riccardo Russu	Toscana (IT)
Roberto Pagni	Toscana (IT) Chair
Sarah Weeks	Highlands (UK)
Stefano Coronati	Lazio (IT)
Vincent Lacarce	Aquitaine (FR)

26 participants

from 19 Regions

AGENDA

- A. Information and results after the multilateral meeting with the European Commission's services.
- B. An update about the organization of the 5th Conference of the Network in Turin.
- C. Network's organizational aspects to be discussed at the 5th Conference.
- D. Name of the Network: last assessment before the adoption.
- E. Information about the website.
- F. aob.

OUTCOMES

A. INFORMATION AND RESULTS OF THE MULTILATERAL MEETING WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S SERVICES.

The meeting with the European Commission's Services take place on 18 April morning from 9.30 to 13.45. The final programme is in the [annex 1](#) and in the Network's website (www.gmofree-euregions.net).

Mr **Orazio Cellini** and Mr. **Justin Amiot** (Tuscany and Bretagne/Pays de La Loire/Poitou-Charentes representatives in Brussels) open the meeting with some remarks about the background of the initiative (mainly oriented toward an exchange of information about the latest initiatives) and with a brief presentation of the speakers.

Mr **Roberto Pagni** (Tuscany) acts as chairman and gives a very quick overview about the topics in the agenda. He underlines the great interest of the Network's Regions to hear the latest update from the European Commission. With the occasion Mr Pagni introduces:

~~the~~ the 5th Network's Conference in Turin on 17 and 18 may;

~~the~~ the Conference on gm-free soy for feedstuff in Brussels on 4-5 December 2007.

Specific invitations will be sent to the Services of the Commission.

Mr **Renaud Layadi** (Bretagne) introduces the Network working system and gives a quick classification (based on the rural economic system) of the Network's member Regions in 3 main types:

- 1) Upper Austria – High percentage of organic farms, importance of land management
- 2) Tuscany – Presence of several PDO – PGI products, social farming, small farms system
- 3) Bretagne – Intensive agriculture with a re-orientation toward high quality as a way to compete on the International market.

Mr Layadi also analyses the Network life, underlining 3 main periods:

- 1) Create the common base (2003-2004);
- 2) Consolidate the initiative and define the mid and long term goals (2005);
- 3) Find allies and new partnerships (2005 onward)

Mr. **Guy Saint Martin** (President of AREPO) explains the AREPO association and the difference between AREPO and the Network of GMO-free Regions. The first one is composed by 25 members which represent both regional governments and producers organizations of the Regions.

He refers to the importance of agriculture to keep a social tissue in our rural areas and so to stop the decreasing of rural population (the depopulation reached a rate of 3% in France during last few years – 10% in Aquitaine). Mr Saint Martin underlines the importance of high quality productions to support the agriculture Gross Value Added and the great efforts that have been done for their support by EU Institution, Member States and Regions.

He introduces the position of AREPO on the use of GMOs in the production process of the origin products. The AREPO is against the use of GM labelled products in the terms of reference of products benefiting from a geographical indication and ask the European Commission:

- to introduce a policy of production and supply of GM-free raw materials for animal feed, particularly concerning oil protein crops and cereals,
- to set up support systems to help non-GM sectors make the additional investments in analysis, traceability and separation of batches required to protect against contamination by GM organisms,
- to ensure that the rules governing the coexistence of conventional crops and GM crops protect totally from all risks of cross-contamination to introduce a policy of production and supply of GM-free raw materials for feedstuff.

This position was reached after a great debate inside AREPO to unify mainly the different sensitiveness of the professional organizations.

After the opening speeches, the Commission's Services start their introduction.

Mrs. **Katarzyna Reiter** (DG AGRI) introduced briefly her Unit and says that it's the first time that the DG AGRI speaks before the other Commission's Services in a debate about GMOs where several services are involved in. This because the DG Agriculture is responsible only for the aspect of coexistence. Mrs Reiter makes at disposal of the audience a presentation (the presentation is on the Network's website).

Mrs Reiter highlights the fact that coexistence is a not harmonized matter and its application is completely demanded at Member States legislations (or Regions where foresees by National constitution). The leading principle of the coexistence is the freedom of choice for consumers and producers. The coexistence of authorized products is only a socio-economic problem because the process of authorization already takes into account and assesses every environmental and health problem.

The coexistence is foreseen in the European legal framework on the basis of art. 26a of Directive CE/18/2001. Moratorium without an environmental or health safety cannot be put in place because of art. 22 of the same Directive (free movement of authorized goods).

47 maize varieties were approved in the common catalogue of varieties and can be use for seeding and growing. All these varieties are based on the MON810 line.

Today the Commission doesn't have clear figures to evidence a benefit for European farmers that use GM varieties, but a recent study of the JRC (not published yet) seems to find out a benefit for Spanish farmers because of less use of pesticides.

An increasing in GMO farming inside the EU has been registered (ES; FR; PT; DE; CZ; SK), even if still limited compared with the USA and Argentina.

A mandatory moratorium applied to every authorized GMO is not possible and would go against the WTO and SPS engagements. A GM-free status could be reached on the basis of voluntary agreement among stakeholders (farmers), but if one farmer want to cultivate GMO these agreements would be automatically broken down. The Commission do not move against who doesn't apply any coexistence measure. The Recommendation CE/556/2004 remains the basic document of the Commission for anybody who want to apply technical rules, both on a voluntary or on a mandatory basis.

Regarding the implement of coexistence regulations and laws, a dialogue between the Commission and Member States is currently possible because of the notification procedures of technical rules for coexistence (Directive 98/34/CE). This procedure allows a good way to hold participative dialogues among institutions and the proposals are visible by every Member State and Region.

The Commission is encountering difficulties about the liability regime because of the problems to prove the responsibilities of possible contamination. No Insurance Company has developed product to compensate this kind of damage. Some Member States (DK, PT and BE) have set up specific funds but there is still no evidence on their functionality.

The Commission has requested a specific study which should be ready before 2007 summer.

Moreover, the European Council on may 2006 requested the Commission to set up crop-specific consensus guidelines to implement the coexistence on National and regional level. The ECoB – European Co-existence Bureau (a Science Based Working Group composed of expert from MS and coordinated by JRC) - is starting this work on the subject of maize and, maybe, potato. The leading principles will be transparency and acceptability. The Commission has not yet decided who invite as stakeholder. In the 2008 is expected a new report from the commission to the Parliament and the Council.

Mr. **Patrice Baillieux** (DG AGRI) presents some updates about the organic regulation and the connection with GMOs (his presentation is available on the website). In the 2005, with the proposal for a new organic regulation, the European Commission and the Council introduced some improvements to the previous act (Reg. 1992/2091/CEE), which has been modified and integrated several time since 1992. The new proposal will be followed by a detailed regulation for its application.

70% of the amendments proposed by the European Parliament were introduced.

Improvements:

- ✂ suppression of the category 70-95%. An organic product must contain at least 95% of organic compound. The single ingredient can be labelled as organic.
- ✂ Introduction of new rules for organic wine.
- ✂ Obligation to use the Communitarian label with the possibility to keep national or private labels and origin labels.
- ✂ Surveillance system is the same with an improvement for the accreditation of control organisms in third Countries.
- ✂ GMOs are not allowed (with a threshold of contamination).

Regarding the GMO contamination threshold, a dispute between the European Parliament and the Commission is ongoing. The Council accepted the proposal of the Commission of a 0,9% threshold for technical unavoidable or accidental contaminations. The Parliament amended this part introducing a 0,1% threshold. The problem now is that the EP sent back the opinion to its Agriculture Committee that for the moment doesn't make any decision, blocking the procedure even in the Council. The EP wants to adopt the co-decision procedure but the EU Commissioner for Agriculture is against this request. At the same time the EP reject the request for an urgent decision procedure. Now the Council has 2 possibilities:

- 1) to wait for the final opinion of the EP, which could be delayed with no limit;
- 2) to break the institutional relations and adopt a decision without the EP consultation.

The second option seems no practicable and the first hypothesis should be followed. In any case the Commission underlines that the current organic regulation is in force and still works quite well. For Mr. Baillieux the problem is not the organic regulation itself but the institutional relation and power. In the second step, regarding the specific technical rules, only the details will be regulated. The general technical framework is not under discussion.

Mr. Baillieux gives also a short overlook to the Rural Development policies and indicates that 100 operative programmes have been presented to the Commission. A lot of Regions have ambitious target (e.g. reach 15% of organic farming – from a current level of 3%). Problems could be meet when the European aids will be dismissed.

Mrs. **Andre Schoboboda** (DG SANCO), introduces briefly the DG sancos duties on GMOs. Essentially they take care of the authorization procedure under the GM food and feed regulation (Reg 2003/1829/CE). At the moment there are few GMOs authorised in Europe but a new generation of GM products is in the pipeline and all over the world several GMOs has been authorised. In the future the modification will insert improvements more attractive for the consumers (OMEGA3, vitamins, etc.).

For the Commission the Regulation 2003/1829/CE is the strictest in the world, accompanied by a strong system of traceability and labelling. Mrs. Schoboboda explains the authorization process and the role of the EFSA in the risk assessment and management.

The EFSA has 6 month to assess the request, to collect comments from Member States and to propose its decision. At the end of the procedure, the public has 1 month to send comments during an online consultation procedure.

After that period, the European Commission has 3 months to adopt a final decision with a qualified majority. With no majority the decision goes to the Council which has to reach a qualified majority too (or a blocking minority). In case of no decision the final decision is up to the European Commission.

At the moment about 40 products are under assessment (mainly maize, canola, potato and sugar beet). About 7 are for cultivation (maize and canola).

The labelling system does not cover the products derived by animals fed with GM feedstuff. Greenpeace collected 1 million signatures to carry on a petition to ask for labelling this kind of products.

The Commission estimated that 70-80% of the products would be affected by this kind of labelling system. The majority of authorized GMOs in Europe are used for feedstuff (maize and soybean). The Council requested to assess possible scientific reasons to adopt a specific legal framework to label animal derived products (meat in particular).

In case of not authorized GMOs the Commission takes urgent counter measures (like in the recent case of LL Rice and BT10 maize). This highlights the good control system that is in place in the European Union.

Mrs. Paula Rey Garcia (DG ENV) gives an overlook of the current situation starting from the report on the implementation of the Directive 2001/18/CE issued recently by the Commission.

26 notification are opened (5 are for cultivation - potatoes and maize). The environmental monitoring system has to be improved, but to do so it's necessary to collect more experience from the Member States and the stakeholders about the commercial release (art. 31 of the Directive).

Only 8 MS are carrying on the authorization procedures and a political discrepancy among MS underlines the lack of reliance in the authorization process.

The Commission will make further step to:

- ~~///~~ improve the post-market monitoring, only after MS will gather more experiences;
- ~~///~~ study the seed production in order to improve the sampling system.

In the last Commission report there are no particular problems to be highlighted and a new report is ongoing. A new relation will be issued in 2009.

Mr. Jean Ferriere (DG TRADE) underlines the peculiarities of the meeting for his service (normally not interlocutors for agricultural issues) and put in evidence that the EU agro-food trade has a positive balance of +1Billion Euros (so it's an exporter).

In the end of 2006 the WTO panel (constituted after complaints against EU moratorium to GMOs) issued its decision about the dispute between European Union and USA, Canada and Argentina. The moratorium was judged an infringement to the SPS agreements. The panel decided also about 27 authorization procedures under EU legal framework. In 3 cases the authorization was withdrawn and the other 24 cases evidenced an undue delay. The panel decided also against several National bans. Every ban was judged as an infringement.

The EU has already removed the moratorium and the authorization procedures have been re-opened. The National moratoriums was eliminated, with the exception of the Austrian one, which seems the only open question. Anyway, no further actions have been taken by Canada and Argentina. USA is still assessing the next step but there is an opened negotiation between EU and USA about the way to put in place the panel recommendations.

The negotiation will be carried on with regular meetings USA-UE during a 12 months period. The Americans want regular updates on the dossier.

Mr. Ferriere affirms that the DG Trade is not interested in the GMO debate but in the free movements of goods.

Mr. Julien Mousnier (Secretariat General) begins his speech with a compliment to the Network because of the evolution of its position on several matters. He introduces briefly a study on European Biotech sector that is presented on 20 April 2007. He affirms the importance of biotechnologies for EU competitiveness. Particularly in the health sector.

Europe has 2.500 biotech industries with 100.000 employees. Compared with USA and other emergent Countries (mainly Cina and India) the situation is not so bad even if the level of research and investments is still low.

Regarding green biotech applications (related with agriculture), Mr Mousnier brings the example of the defeat of BSE as big contribute from biotech sector. For the future, an important area where biotech (and GMOs) could play an key role is the biomass production for energetic use.

About GMOs, Mr Mousnier puts in evidence that several new events are under development (mainly applied to industrial or chemicals sector).

The Eurobarometer evidences the acceptance of biotech applications by the consumers. Only GMOs are not well accepted. The Commission highlights that the low benefits directed to consumers is the main reason of this scarce acceptance.

The European Commission firmly relis on the biotech strategy and will improve the strategic plan put in place in 2002. The main driver application will be the 7th Framework Programme for Research, where biotech has a great relief. Besides research activities, the Commission will promote biotech with the support of pilot actions. This should allow a better knowledge transfer from research to industry. European biotech industries are mainly medium and small companies.

Another important key issue is the Networking to improve the knowledge. The Network of GMO-free Regions could be an important interlocutors for the commission and should look at other example like the Biovalley and Scanbalt projects.

The Commission will continue its action plan till 2010.

After this introduction from the European Commission's Services, the Network started its presentation that aims at pose several question to the EC representatives. The presentation is on the website. (*Please, refer to the presentation for the Network's questions*).

European Commission's Services reaction

Mrs. **Reiter** answers to coexistence related queries. She says that EC doesn't want to favour GMOs, but Regions can only be GM-free on a voluntary agreement basis. She bring the example of Portugal, where the coexistence law foresees GM-free Areas of 2 kinds:

~~☞~~ on a base of political decision (with public announcements) from Ministries and local authorities and

~~☞~~ on a basis of farmers request to the municipalities.

In both cases if 1 farmer disagree with the proposed agreement, this is broken. In any case the announcement must be repeated during years.

Regarding who bears the costs of coexistence, the Commission use the principle of "*who came first*". In an area where farmers who want to use GMOs arrives after conventional or organic farmers, the first ones must bear coexistence costs. But where GMOs are already grown and a conventional or organic farmer arrives later, this one must assume the costs of the coexistence (distances, etc.). In any case no Member State, but Netherlands and Poland, adopted this "*new comers*" principle.

Currently there are no study to assess the real costs of the coexistence.

Regarding the participation to the new working group on specific guidelines, every MS can indicate an expert and joins the European initiatives.

Regarding the COEXNET, there has been 3 meetings. Another one is expected to take place before summer.

Mr. **Baillieux** answers to organic farming related queries. He recognizes that contamination thresholds have been decided on a political basis. Anyway, about their range, even Green party and IFOAM are holding internal discussion and are splitting up.

The EP Agri Commission should present its amendments to new organic regulation on 8 may 2007, so the regulatory process should be re-opened. The Council can decide to vote against the Parliament but needs an unanimous vote. The final decision should arrive before summertime. The new regulation should enter into force on January 1st 2009.

Mrs. **Rey Garcia** adds some information about the current situation but doesn't answer to the Network queries. In particular she says that they need more info from MS and a new study on cost analysis must be launched.

Mr. **Ferriere** adds some information about the need to justify in a sound scientific manner any ban, which must be in any case specie-specific. He refers about an example of ban against the import of cat and dog furs based on public disorder reason (art. 20 of GATT).

In this view, the ambition to get an advantage by a GM-free status can be taken only without compromise international trade agreements. A moral ban will create problems.

A lot of commercial not EU partners are waiting for a false move from EU to put in place countermeasures under SPS agreement.

Mr. **Mousnier** doesn't add anything else to his introduction speech, but no questions have been made to his attention.

Mr. **Marco VALLETTA** (DG SANCO) answers to questions raised on topics related to labelling systems and GM-free production chains.

He affirms that the choice to not label food derived from animals fed with GMOs was taken because it's out of the scope of the Regulation 2003/1830/CE. Furthermore the regulation aims at a positive labelling (only when GMOs are present).

A specific decision in this matter would be translated in a regulation only in case of food directly derived from the animal fed with GMOs (e.g. meat).

After the Greenpeace petition, the Commissioner for Health decided to assign to the EFSA the duty to carry out a study to assess the scientific basis of this kind of measure in order to make a final decision. So there is no rethinking (as asserted by some press) but only an in deep analysis.

For the moment a GM-free voluntary labelling is judged sufficient by the Commission. Clearly this GM-free status must intervene only where GMOs are authorized (e.g. GM-free strawberry cannot be used as labelling because no GM-strawberry exists).

More information about COEXNET initiative

During the report about the Multilateral, some information about the COEXNET have been given to the Assembly. It's possible to get information about the work of the COEXNET from the CIRCA website. The procedure is the following:

- 1) <http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/agri/home/main>
- 2) Click on "sign up"
- 3) Fill out the form. Remember the password as you will need it later.
- 4) Once the form is completed and submitted, you will receive an email with your username and transaction number.
- 5) You have to log in now. Click on "sign in", use the username stated in the email and the password. Select the CIRCA domain and then select the group "COEX-NET".
- 6) To obtain an overview of all the documents on the site, click "Library" on the menu list.

B. AN UPDATE ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE 5TH CONFERENCE OF THE NETWORK IN TURIN.

Point B is only quickly introduced and the Steering Committee meeting re-opens the works to improve the provisional programme of the Turin Conference ([Annex 2](#)).

The attention is also focused on the joint statement between our Network and the International Commission for the Future of Food. The final draft of the statement is presented by Tuscany Region. In the annex 3 you can find the EN final draft.

The document will be signed during the 5th Conference of the Network in Turin on 17 may afternoon session.

The statements is composed by a first part of principles (which resume the actions of the 2 subjects – based on the Charter of Florence and the 2 Manifesto of the International Commission) and a final part of possible fields of action for future initiatives.

The representative of the Croatian Regions declares that some Croatian Region could join the Network with a signing of the Charter of Florence during the Turin Conference. A specific section for the signing is foreseen in the provisional programme at the end of 18 May morning session.

Point C, D, E and F are not discussed.

Annexes:

- 1) Annex 1: Multilateral final programme
- 2) Annex 2: 5th Conference provisional Programme
- 3) Annex 3: Joint Statement

MULTILATERAL MEETING

PROGRAMME

Wednesday April 18th, Brussels - rond point Schuman 14

9h30

Welcome and presentation of participants

Justin Amiot - Bxl Office Bretagne

Orazio Cellini - Bxl Office Toscana

9h40 - 10h00

Chairman

Roberto PAGNI – Toscana, Presidency of the Network

Presentation of the network

Renaud LAYADI – Bretagne

AREPO position

Guy SAINT MARTIN, President of AREPO - PDO, PGI and food quality

10h00 - 11h30

State of the art and perspectives from the European Commission services

- Coexistence debate, guidelines, COEX NET working group - **Katarzyna REITER**, DG AGRI);
- Revision of Organic farming regulation, perspectives in a rural development context - **Patrice BAILLIEUX**, DG AGRI;
- Report on transgenic food and feed, seed purity, labelling - **Dorothee ANDRE** – **SCHOBOBODA** and **Marco VALLETTA**, DG SANCO;
- Report on directive 2001/18 implementation - **Paula REY GARCIA**, DG ENV;
- International agreements et WTO last developments - **Jean FERRIERE**, DG TRADE;
- Revision of the European biotechnology strategy - **Julien MOUSNIER**, SG;

11h30 -12h15

Contribution from the regions

- GMO authorisation process - **Labros TSIOURGIANIS**, ENAE
- Coexistence - **Bérénice VINCENT**, Aquitaine
- Organic farming – **Gerald LONAUER**, Oberösterreich
- Food labelling - **Riccardo RUSSU**, Toscana
- International cooperation and food chain - **Renaud LAYADI**, Bretagne
- Seed purity – **Ivana STELLA**, Umbria
- Research - **Alessandra BIANCHI**, Lazio

12h15 - 12h45

Exchange of views

12h45 - 13h00

Conclusions

Gerald LONAUER - Oberösterreich, Vice Presidency of the network

13h00

Buffet with products of origin offered by EUSKADI

5TH CONFERENCE OF THE GMO-FREE EUROPEAN REGIONS' NETWORK

17-18 May 2007, Turin – ITALY

Centro Congressi Unione Industriale di Torino – Sala dei Duecento (Via Vincenzo Vela, 17)

17 may	morning	<p>Opening session (9.00 – 9.30) 9.00 – Welcomes Mercedes Bresso, Piemonte Region President Susanna Cenni, Presidency of the Network</p> <p>Moratorium and coexistence (9.30 – 13.30) Works carried out by the network in 3 years of activities: results & future perspectives 9.30 – 3 ½ years of Network's activity, a global review – Gerald Lonauer, Land Oberösterreich 10.00 – What coexistence ? a review – Bérenice Vincent, Regional Councillor, Région Aquitaine 10.20 – Recent evolution of the EC Legislation – Representative from ENAE 10.40 – Research and FP7, projects for the calls – Alessandra Bianchi, Regione Lazio</p> <p>11.00 – Coffee Break</p> <p>11.20 – Liability schemes – a representative from Wales 11.40 – Safeguarding seed diversity, a vital necessity – Ivana Stella, Regione Umbria 12.00 – Seeking control protocols : the regional approach – Representative from Euskadi 12.20 – Communicating and exchanging : our network's website – Fabio Boscaleri, Regione Toscana 12.40 – Debate and conclusion – Net's Presidency + Regione Piemonte</p> <p>13.30 – Lunch</p>
	afternoon	<p>Globalisation and rights of choice for territories and citizens (15.00 – 18.30) The safeguard of biodiversity, food sovereignty in:</p> <p>Europe</p> <p>15.00 – Opening (Chairperson: Carlo Petrini, Slow Food) 15.10 – A European success story ? the first round for the Virrankosky report (1 or 2 MEPs) 15.40 – Preserving Europe's agricultural heritage in quality labels – Guy Saint Martin, President of AREPO 16.00 – Preserving a non-GM feedstuff supply; the 2007 campaign – Pascale Loget, Région Bretagne 16.15 – Role of Regions in the decision making process - Pedro Sanz Alonso, President of CoR DEVE Commission 16.30 – Civil society against GMOs: - The 1 million names petitions, a major step, Marco Contiero, Greenpeace - The EU institutions on GMOs and key challenges for GMfree agriculture - an NGO perspective, Helen Holder, FOE - Europe 17.00 – GMOs and organic farming – Marco Schlüter, IFOAM Europe Director</p> <p>... and all over the world</p> <p>17.15 – Actions to preserve biodiversity: Presentation of the joint statement between the Network and the International Commission on Future of Food - Vandana Shiva, President of the International Commission on Future of Food</p> <p>Signature of the Joint Statement between the Network and the International Commission Susanna Cenni, Presidency, Network of GMO-Free Regions Vandana Shiva, President, International Commission on future of food</p> <p>18.00 – Conclusion</p> <p>20.00 – Gala Dinner with traditional regional food (Slow Food)</p>
	morning	<p>Which agriculture for the Europe of tomorrow? (9.00 – 13.30) Common Agriculture Policy future developments: implications for rural areas and the role of European Regions 9.00 – Opening Mercedes Bresso, President of Piemonte Region</p> <p>9.20 – Round of table with the participation of Ministers and Councillors from the Regions of the Network : Mino Taricco, Susanna Cenni, Josef Stockinger, Beatrice Gendreau, Odette Herviaux, Richard Durham, Paolo Petrini, ... <u>Other representatives invited to the roundtable:</u> Italian Minister for agriculture, EU Commissioners for Agriculture and Health, European Commission's DG AGRI, DG SANCO and General Secretariat, Members of European Parliament, Committee of Regions representatives. (tbc)</p>

		<p><i>11.30 – Coffee break</i></p> <p>12.15 – Final debate, proposals and presentation of joint initiatives 13.15 – Conclusion (Net’s Presidency + Piemonte) 13.30 – Signature of the Florence Charter by incoming new member Regions</p> <p>Press conference (13.00 – 13.30)</p>
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In blue confirmed speakers.

Draft

JOINT STATEMENT
of
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
and
THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF GMO-FREE REGIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES
Florence, 14 December 2006

On 4 and 5 February 2003 the International Commission on the Future of Food and Agriculture was established in Florence, with the support and active participation of the Government of the Region of Tuscany, with the aim of working to ensure that food and agriculture become more socially and ecologically sustainable, more accessible, and putting food quality, food safety and public health above corporate profits.

The principles on which the work of the Commission is based are found in the ‘Florence Declaration on Global Food Rights’ and further elaborated in the ‘Manifesto on the Future of Food’ and the ‘Manifesto on the Future of Seeds’.

On November 2003 **the Network of European GMO-free Regions and Local Authorities** was established in Brussels and **on 5 February 2005** the Network’s targets and field of action were defined in Florence with the signing of the “*Charter of the Regions and Local Authorities of Europe on the subject of coexistence of genetically modified crops with traditional and organic farming*”.

Each of these documents assert the imperative of protecting biodiversity and the rights of farmers to be GMO free, and of valorizing locally based agriculture.

Thus, the International Commission on the Future of Food and the European Network of GMO-free Regions and Local Authorities

JOINTLY DECLARE AND AFFIRM THAT:

1. All human beings on the planet have a fundamental human right to access and/or to produce sufficient food to sustain their lives and communities. Every government - regional, national, international – is obliged to guarantee this right.
2. All healthy food and agricultural systems are dependent upon the protection of the natural world, and the maintenance of earth’s biodiversity. This protection must be a priority for all governments and communities and all rules should be aligned with this purpose.
3. All human beings have the right to food that is safe and nutritious. No technological interventions in food production should be permitted until proven to meet local standards of safety, nutrition, health and sustainability. The precautionary principle must apply in all matters.
4. The international rules have to be modified so that no nation could be forced to accept any foods or other agricultural imports across its borders that have been produced in this manner, or that the nation considers detrimental to public health, environment, local agriculture or cultural traditions, or for any other reason.
5. All individuals, communities and national entities have an inherent right to all relevant information about the foods they consume, the processes used to produce them, and where the food comes from, thereby ensuring their sovereign right to make informed choices regarding the safety and health of the food they consume and the safety and health of the environment. The Cartagena protocol rules must be applied.
6. The Regional Governments have the right to choose the agricultural system for their territory and to define how to protect the conventional, organic and traditional productions, safeguarding biodiversity. Moreover, they must have the freedom to prohibit OGM crops in order to avoid the contamination of local productions.
7. The agricultural systems based on the production and consumption localisation, on the respect of the food sovereignty and on the biodiversity adding to value have to be encouraged and supported.
8. The biodiversity of the Regions must be protected by measures that encourage the registration of native varieties and species in biodiversity conservation catalogues and the exploitation of these varieties and species in the farming industry, so preventing this heritage becoming patented;

9. Seeds are a gift of nature and of diverse cultures that must be passed from generation to generation. They are a common property resource, to be shared for the well being of all and saved for the well being of future generations.
10. No life form, be it plant, animal or human life, can be patented or monopolized. Every violations of dignity and 'sanctity' of life, of the principles of biodiversity, and of the legitimate inheritance of farmers and indigenous peoples worldwide must be fought according to the Convention on Biological Diversity that, at the art. 1, affirms: "The objectives of this Convention [...] are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources".
11. Seeds are a "commons" and thus the freedom to exchange seeds among farming communities must be an inalienable right. This also includes the right to sell and to share seeds on a "non-exclusive basis".
12. Farmers must have the freedom to be free of genetic contamination and biopollution. The introduction of new varieties and plants must take into account the potential environmental risks as well as other potential detrimental agricultural effects. The 'Terminator' technology that renders seed sterile and unable to reproduce itself is an assault on the fundamental nature of seed as the source of reproduction of life and must be banned on a global level.

On the basis of the aforementioned principles, the International Commission on the Future of Food and the European Network of GMO-free Regions and Local Authorities

UNDERTAKE TO:

- **Promote** a transformation of the agro-food system through participatory democracy, knowledgeable consumer behaviour, socially responsible enterprises and independent nutritional education on the basis of guidelines for development that contribute to combating the erosion of agricultural biodiversity, chemical and genetic pollution and contamination and global warming of the planet;
- **Work** towards the reform of international rules for food and agriculture, especially the regulations and standards of the WTO and the regulations of the FAO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures that are in conflict with the aforementioned principles;
- **Promote** the ratification of international agreements aimed at guaranteeing the supply of high quality raw materials and seeds which are certified "GMO-free" to respect the principle of fair trade between the Northern and Southern parts of the world;
- **Act** within the framework of the European Union and national institutions in order that the procedures for the authorization of new GMO varieties be contingent upon not only respect for ethical, preventive and precautionary principles, but also proof of positive effects for consumers and society in general;
- **Launch** international alliances with the major NGOs for the purpose of urging international bodies to protect and support the rights of farmers and consumers;
- **Commit** to state the principle of zero tolerance for GMO residues in organic products.

Signed on the of May 2007 in ...

On behalf of the International Commission on the Future of Food and Agriculture	On behalf of the GMO-free European Regions Network
The President, Vandana Shiva	The Coordinator, Susanna Cenni, Minister for Agriculture, Tuscany Region