



Press Release

20 March 2007

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Campaign on GMO](#)

The Bulgarian GMO law remain restrictive

“There is no necessity of amendments in GMO Law [1] at this point”. This was the conclusion reached on an informal meeting by representatives of the Parliamentary Environmental Committee, the Minister of environment and his political cabinet. *The Bulgarian law is not in conflict with the European legislation, it is even more restrictive. Only if the European Commission comes up with an explicit position about policy change we will consider this issue. Until now the regulations did not cause serious contradictions with the practice,* said George Bozhinov, Chair of the Parliamentary committee on environment.

This meeting was a result of the public campaign run by AGROLINK Association and other NGOs working for informing the public about the dangers related to GMO. On March 12, 2007 AGROLINK organized a press-conference on the topic, together with a group of French farmers and NGO representatives who work on GMO issues.

Svetla Nikolova, Chair of AGROLINK Association and a member of the Working group for GMO amendment in the Ministry of Environment said:

Priority should be on sustainable agriculture, a modern form of agriculture with a future for farmers, communities, consumers, biodiversity and environment. The potential amendments to the Bulgarian GMO law which make it more liberal would bring problems in agricultural products' marketing and loss of biodiversity.

The GMO law was adopted by the National assembly in 2005 after heated debates and pressure on behalf of *GMO free Bulgaria* Coalition.

The law states that:

- The deliberate release into the environment and the placing on the market of the following GMOs is hereby prohibited: tobacco, vine, cotton, damask rose, wheat, and all vegetable and fruits.
- The deliberate release of any GMOs into the areas included in the National Ecological Network within the meaning given by the Biological Diversity Act, as well as into the adjoining areas within a zone of 30 kilometers around any such areas, is hereby prohibited.

- The deliberate release into the environment and the placing on the market of any GMOs containing antibiotic resistance marker genes is hereby prohibited.

All these bans are criticized by some representative of the government coalition and the strong lobby of biotech companies in Bulgaria. The law amendments were initiated by the Ministry of Environment as a result of a report produced within a Twinning project, in which experts of Ministries for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection of Germany and Bulgarian Ministry of Environment participate [2].

[1] GMO Act http://www.moew.government.bg/index_e.html

[2] PHARE-Project BG04/IB/EN/02 „Transposition and Implementation of the Environmental *Acquis* on GMOs at National Level”

AGROLINK's mission is to promote sustainable agriculture, to coordinate national organic farmers' network, to support protection of the environment and the implementation of sustainable development principles

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