



CPE
*Coordination
Paysanne Européenne*



GREENPEACE



OPEN LETTER TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 18 March 2003

Dear Commissioners,

We have noticed that the European Commission has taken the initiative for a **Round Table on research results relating to co-existence of GM and non-GM crops**, to be organised by the Research Directorate General on April 24th 2003 in Brussels. However, we believe this Round Table does not fulfil the promise made by the Commission in a press release dated March 5th 2003 that “stakeholders will have their say”:

- The Round Table only deals with scientific and technical matters. This is to be done in an unbalanced way, since the GMO industry is well represented in the panels, whereas other concerned parties are not represented.
- The programme of the Round Table does not allow for consultation of stakeholders on all policy options relating to co-existence. Important questions such as “ who is going to bear the extra costs related to co-existence measures ” are not addressed.
- The Communication on co-existence, presented by Mr. Fischler and apparently approved by the European Commission on March 5th, is not on the agenda, whereas we believe that this document, or any other paper that would clarify the official position of the Commission on this matter, should be discussed by stakeholders.

We are certainly not opposed to any discussion on the latest scientific evidence regarding the gene flow of maize and rape seed as proposed and presented by scientists and industry-representatives.

However, we are very concerned that our participation in the Round Table could be misinterpreted, and legitimise the idea that this Round Table is a proper stakeholders’ meeting, which it is not. Therefore, we would appreciate your assurance that the Commission will start a proper consultation process on all possible policy options on co-existence in a thorough way with the EU institutions as well as the different member states. This consultation process should involve the general public and representatives of the organic farming, trade, processing, and retail sector as well as environmental, agricultural and consumer organisations. We strongly believe that the Commission should only adopt any further policy proposals relating to co-existence after such a consultation process has been completed.

To avoid misunderstandings we would like to ask you to confirm that the April 24th meeting is not going to be presented to the public as the proper consultation meeting of all stakeholders to address these issues. Without such a confirmation, we are afraid we will not be able to participate in the Round Table.

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