



ESA NEWSLETTER

July/August 2009

External Meetings (selected)

- **31.08. -04.09.2009**
UPOV TWA
Seoul
- **08.09. - 10.09.2009**
World Seed Conf.
Rome
- **14.08. -15.08.2009**
EFSA Conference
on GMO risk ass.
Brussels
- **16.09.- 18.09.2009**
AGPM/Seproma
Annual Meeting
Clermont Ferrand
- **18.09.2009**
ETP Plants for the
Future Ex.Com.
Brussels

Dear Members,

Just after the Belgian State holiday of 21. July signaled the start of the 'real holiday season' up to August 15th (yet another state holiday), DG Environment started its official 'consultation' of stakeholders in its evaluation of the legislation on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment.

Only a couple of days earlier, ESA had participated as Member of DG SANCO's Advisory Group on the Food Chain in a meeting with other evaluators that are responsible for a similar exercise for the GM food and feed legislation. While SANCO had announced both the evaluation as well as all subsequent steps way in advance, invited stakeholders to inform them about timetable and next steps and specifically underlined that no consultation would be sought during August as input would be too limited, DG Environment does just the opposite. *Honi soit qui mal y pense...*

On July 22nd a website was launched and on 23rd, the evaluator started to contact at least those stakeholders that were still in their offices with a lengthy questionnaire and the request for interviews to be conducted –if possible- still in August.

Again and again, the process of GM risk assessment and authorizations (well, if there were any, that is) are being criticized for their lack of transparency. More and more documents have to be made available to the interested public at an early stage and less and less information is accepted as confidential. One can't help but think that a little more transparency and 'customer orientation' as regards companies that provide jobs and contribute to competitive agriculture would be welcomed as well.

ESA is currently working on its answer to the stakeholder questionnaire and will make this available to all ESA Members for information and appropriate use in their possible own consultation or input to the internet consultation. Following debate by our Working Group Breeding Techniques, the CRLA and the ESA Board, the final ESA Position will be with you on September 7th at the latest. This is just a good week before the deadline but I sincerely hope that members will still find it helpful in their deliberations. I would also like to add that we are openly exchanging with our colleagues from EuropaBio on our respective positions and that this exchange has been very fruitful and constructive.

As you may imagine, together with the already ongoing evaluations of the seed marketing legislation (Better regulation initiative), the plant health regime and the GM food and feed Regulation, this is already the fourth evaluation we have to deal with in parallel. And this not even the end of it. We still expect similar exercises for the IP framework and, or including, farm saved seed. As you may imagine, this places a huge workload on Secretariat and Members of our responsible Committees and Working Groups. It also will test our communication skills towards the Membership, not only in ESA but also in national associations, and towards third parties. But it also provides us with great opportunities to bring improvements to the seed industry's regulatory environment that will help to sustain and promote competitive plant breeding in Europe – and that is definitely worth all efforts!

With best regards, yours

Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General



Szonja Csorgo joins the ESA team as new Manager Intellectual Property and Legal Affairs



Following the departure of Isabelle Klopstein at the end of July, the ESA team is strengthened again by the arrival of Szonja Csorgo who will take on the new position of “Manager Intellectual Property and Legal Affairs”.

Szonja is Hungarian, and next to English speaks French and Italian. Following her studies in law during which she specialised in IP and competition law, she worked with the European Commission’s Legal Service and DG Competition.

We are very happy to welcome Szonja to the ESA team and are looking forward to working with her! (vE)

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DG AGRI agrees that improvements of the Advisory Group Seed are needed – but does not (yet) commit to a second meeting

Following the last meeting of the DG AGRI Advisory Group Seeds in April this year and the election of Michael Gohn (Chair of the ESA Section Cereals and Pulses) as new President of the AGS, ESA had set up a brainstorming meeting with the Commission services to discuss possibilities for an improvement of the efficiency of meetings and on how to make the agenda as interesting as possible for members. More specifically, and in line with the request of all AGS Members, ESA had officially addressed the Commission with a request for a second meeting of the AGS which so far is only meeting once per year.

Meanwhile, the Commission has provided an official answer that confirms the interest to improve efficiency and effectiveness – but remains non committal as regards ESA’s request for a new meeting rhythm. ESA will address the issue again towards DG AGRI and DG SNCO at the next opportunity. (vE)

ESA Annual Meeting 2009 – update

All reserved trade tables for the ESA Annual Meeting have been taken and registration is already at 434 participants (status 31.08). If you haven’t registered yet, what more reason do you need? Be there – everybody else will!

Next edition of the ESA Newsletter

The next edition of the ESA Newsletter will be published on 30.09.2009.

ESA Meetings (all meetings at the ESA Office)

- 01.09.2009
WGBT
- 02.09.2009
WGBR
- 03.09.2009
CRLA
- 04.09.2009
ESA Board
- 07.09.2009
ESA SVOwic
Lead P. conf. call
- 07.09.2009
ESA SPO con. c.
- 14.09.2009
WGP
- 14.09.2009
STAT DWG c. c.
- 15.09.2009
SFG Monitoring
- 17.09.2009
STAT
- 21.09.2009
CIPR Conf. call
- 29.09.2009
WGBT (tbc)
- 30.09.2009
WGB