

Workshop Announcement

Scrutinizing GMO Risk Assessment

Evaluating the practice of risk assessment of genetically modified plants and food in the EU

10 December 2003, Hotel Strudlhof, Vienna

Organised by the Austrian Federal Environment Agency and the
Inter-University Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture

Outline

Specific requirements for GMO risk assessment are not explicitly detailed in EU legislation and have largely taken shape in the course of the authorization procedure. The resulting procedures of risk assessment have not been particularly transparent and have frequently been criticised.

The first part of this workshop will shed some light on the practice of risk assessment in the context of EU authorizations for placing on the market of genetically modified plants and food. The focus will be on the assessment of potential toxic and allergenic properties and on the application of the concept of Substantial Equivalence.

The second part of the workshop focuses on proposals to further improve and standardize GMO risk assessment. A set of measures will be presented and commented on by experts from universities, competent authorities, industry, and NGOs.

Finally, a panel discussion will deal with further steps that need to be taken in order to keep the process of detailing and standardization of risk assessment moving forward.

Parts of the workshop will be covered by presenting the results and conclusion of a study that was recently completed by the organisers of this workshop.

Contact and Registration

Participants should register by 24 November 2003 the latest. No registration fee will be required. For further information or registration, please contact Sandra Karner at Inter-University Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture (IFF/IFZ), Schloegelgasse 2, A-8010 Graz, karner@ifz.tugraz.at, phone +43 316 812661-33, fax +43 316 812661-11.

Organisational Remarks

No conference fees will be required. Accommodation arrangements must be made by the participants on their own. However, a limited number of rooms are reserved for workshop participants in Hotel Arcotel Boltzmann which is in walking distance to the venue. In order to book a room, please contact Mrs. Daniela Dvoracek, boltzmann@arcotel.at, phone +43 1 31612-0 by 9 November 2003 the latest. Please, mention the workshop when contacting Hotel Arcotel Boltzmann.

This workshop is funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Health and Women and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

Preliminary Workshop Programme

Morning Session - Chair: Helmut Gaugitsch

10:00 **Welcome**

Maria Rauch-Kallat, Minister of Health and Women

Josef Pröll, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
(to be confirmed)

Introductory remarks

Helmut Gaugitsch, Federal Environment Agency (UBA), Vienna

10:20 **Toxicity assessment**

Heinz Hofer, Austrian Research Centers, Seibersdorf Research

10:40 **Allergenicity assessment**

Rudolf Valenta, Department of Pathophysiology, University of Vienna

11:00 **Substantial equivalence**

Petra Lehner, nutrition scientist, Vienna

11:20 to 11:50 Coffee Break

11:50 **Differences between EU and USA**

Susanne Stirn, Research Center for Biotechnology, Society and the Environment
(BIOGUM), University of Hamburg

12:10 **Results in the context of legislation and guidelines**

Armin Spök, Inter-University Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture
(IFF/IFZ), Graz

ca. 12:30 to 13:30 Lunch Break

Afternoon Session - Chair: Armin Spök

13:30 **View of Competent Authority**

N.N.

14:10 **Industry's view**

Simon Barber, European Association for Bioindustries (EuropaBio), Brussels

14:50 **NGO's view**

Emily Diamand, Friends of the Earth (FoE), UK

ca. 15:30 to 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 **Panel discussion "Improving GMO risk assessment - How to proceed from here?"**

Representatives of CA, EuropaBio, FoE, and Science

17:00 **Closing remarks**

Helmut Gaugitsch, Federal Environment Agency (UBA), Vienna

ca. 17.15 Closing