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BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR  
GESUNDHEIT UND FRAUEN

# THE ROLE OF PRECAUTION IN GMO POLICY

18–19 April 2006

## Registration

Participation is free of charge. However please note that participation is limited due to space constraints and only a restricted number of registrations can be accepted. Therefore participation is only granted upon receipt of confirmation due by March 8<sup>th</sup> 2006.

For Registration please use <http://event-registration.bmgf.gv.at>

Please be sure to register by February 24<sup>th</sup> 2006!

## Venue and accommodation

The conference will take place at the Hofburg, the former imperial palace, located in the city centre of Vienna. The Special Event in the Evening of the 18<sup>th</sup> April will take place in the Natural History Museum, in walking distance from the conference venue.

Vienna is one of Europe's most interesting cities, calling itself "world capital of music" and celebrating Mozart's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2006. For further information: <http://www.wien.gv.at/english>.

Hotel Rooms have been pre-reserved at a special rate. You will need to make your own reservations as soon as possible upon receiving confirmation of participation. The following link takes you to an agency, where you can assess the pre-booked rooms and find assistance in booking:

<http://vienna.nethotels.com/search.htm?Rekursiv=Y&vm=2&idalloc=2498&dd=18&mm=04&yyyy=2006>

Please note that all hotel costs, including any cancellation fees must be covered by participants.

## Contact

For registration and further information contact:

[PrecautionandGMOs@umweltbundesamt.at](mailto:PrecautionandGMOs@umweltbundesamt.at)



# The Role of Precaution in GMO Policy

18–19 April 2006; Hofburg, Vienna (Austria)

The expert conference “The Role of Precaution in GMO Policy” is initiated jointly by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, the Environment and Water Management and the Ministry of Health and Women within the frame of the Austrian EU-Presidency. The Umweltbundesamt (Federal Environment Agency) is responsible for realisation.

## Objectives of the Conference

Starting out from the precautionary principle, which is firmly established in European law, the actual and possible development of this principle in GMO policy is examined from legal and scientific perspectives as well as on the basis of case studies at national, European and international levels.

The conference is expected to gather a select group of stakeholders from various countries and organisations. Participants will be provided with a forum to discuss relevant aspects of the precautionary approach towards regulation of GMOs. Main topics discussed are possibilities and limits of precautionary measures within the existing legal framework, the scientific background of precautionary approaches, as well as the practical experiences in applying the precautionary principle.

Conclusions of the conference should highlight the current state of discussion on precautionary approaches towards GMOs and emphasize the specific needs for further developments on the EU and international level.

## Draft Programme

### Tuesday, 18 April 2006

#### 9:30 – 10:00 Welcome notes:

Maria Rauch-Kallat, *Minister of Health and Women*  
Werner Wutscher, *General Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management*

#### 10:00 – 13:00 SESSION 1: Political/Regulatory Context

Chair: Hugo-Maria Schally, *DG Environment (International Affairs), European Commission*

Opening presentation:

“Precaution goes without saying, but comes with controversies”  
Christine von Weizsäcker, *Germany*

“Implementing EU legislation on GMOs – is there room for precaution?”  
Kathryn Tierney, *DG Environment, European Commission*,

“Interpretation of the Precautionary Approach to GMOs in CEE countries. Use it or abuse it?”  
Liina EEK, *Ministry of the Environment, Estonia*

#### Panel discussion

all Speakers and David Wield, *Open University, United Kingdom*  
Eric White, *European Commission Legal Service, European Commission*

#### 14:30 – 17:30 SESSION 2: Scientific Background

Chair: Thomas Jakl, *Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management*

“GMO risk assessment under conditions of biological (and social) complexity”  
Brian Wynne, *Lancaster University, United Kingdom*

“Risk assessment in the food chain: GMO's in food producing animals”  
Jürgen Zentek, *Free University Berlin, Germany*

“Assessing the wider impacts of novel crops; lessons from the farm-scale trials of genetically-modified herbicide-tolerant crops”  
Christopher Pollock, *Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER), United Kingdom*

#### Panel discussion

all Speakers and Margaret Mellon, *Union of Concerned Scientists, USA*  
Katja Moch, *Öko-Institut Freiburg, Germany*

#### 20:00 Evening Event – Naturhistorisches Museum Vienna

### Wednesday, 19 April 2006

#### 9:00 – 12:30 SESSION 3: Practical Experience

Chair: Michel Haas, *Ministry of Health and Women*

“Some consequences of the use and non-use of precaution on large scale, long latency hazards: 1896-2000”  
David Gee, *European Environment Agency*

“Precaution in Risk Characterisation of GM Plants Regarding Food/Feed Safety and Environmental Impact”  
Harry Kuiper, *GMO-Panel EFSA, RIKILT – Institute of Food Safety, Netherlands*

“Precaution, sustainability, socio-economic and ethic considerations – The Norwegian Gene Technology Act as an example”  
Jan Husby, *GenØk – Norwegian Institute of Gene Ecology, Norway*

#### Panel discussion

all Speakers and Simon Barber, *Plant Biotechnology Unit, EuropaBio*