

RFI 7092

The agenda, minutes, meeting papers and attendees for the EuropaBio Event & Bayer CropSciences visit by Defra Chief Scientific Advisor Ian Boyd on 22 January 2014. Communications between Defra and EuropaBio or its member companies on preparation for and follow-up to these meetings.

EMAIL FROM EUROPABIO TO DEFRA AND OTHERS 29/1/14

Subject: Ag Biotech Update

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

The debate on genetically modified (GM) crops may at last be changing, as many people do care about the [scientific consensus](#) which is supported also by the [European Academies of Science](#), and are getting tired of old unfounded myths.

EuropaBio is keen to support this change with last week's EuropaBio [event](#) featuring speeches by British secretary of state for the environment [Owen Paterson](#) and [Paula Testori Coggi](#) (Director General of the Commission's DG SANCO). Further speakers included the developers of GM products with consumer benefits such as golden rice, gluten free wheat, high oleic acid in soy, oilseeds enriched in Omega 3 and GM cassava for Africa, as well as supply chain partners.

The event launched the new "[Growing Voices](#)" online platform which aims to help EU citizens learn about the reality of GM crops, while giving a greater voice to the many non-industry supporters of this advanced plant breeding technique. Everyone is most welcome to participate in this platform and engage in the discussion! You can already subscribe to the Growing Voices [newsletter](#), which will give you access to the latest video interviews posted on the website.

Meanwhile, the political situation in the EU remains unchanged for now, with an ever slower [GM approvals system](#) (see also [attached](#)) and a politicised rather than science based debate in the EU institutions including the [Commission](#). The General Court of the EU concluded twice in late 2013 that the Commission has mismanaged the approval process. On [26 September 2013](#), it ruled that "the European Commission has failed to fulfil its obligations (...) by failing to submit to Council" a GM dossier and added that "the Commission cannot, in a dilatory manner, repeatedly request opinions from EFSA". This ruling concerns the long pending application of maize 1507 for cultivation in the EU, which is currently being debated at Council level. On world food day, scientists and farmers groups voices their [concern](#) about the situation.

At EuropaBio, we are pleased to take our responsibility in providing factual information on GMOs, in the form of our [pocket guide](#), [factsheets](#), [frequently asked questions](#), [reports](#), [videos](#) etc. Please also take a look at [IP52](#) – a new portal with short videos on intellectual property.

We are looking forward to continuing the conversation.

Best regards

SECRETARY OF STATE'S LETTER TO EUROPABIO AFTER 22/1/14 GROWING VOICES EVENT

Thank you for your letter of 10 January about EU decisions on the authorisation of GM products.

As I made clear in my speech at the 'Growing Voices: Healthy Food' event on 22 January, the UK Government believes strongly that GM regulatory decisions should be based on the scientific evidence. We will therefore be voting in favour of authorisation for 1507 maize, given the clear opinion of EFSA and the independent scientific group that advises UK Ministers on this subject.

I will continue to argue for the EU regime to operate so that safe GM products are approved without unjustified delays, and for all our EU partners to recognise that this is important for several reasons, including innovation, sustainability, economic growth, trade and the future competitiveness of EU agriculture.

SPEECH BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE OWEN PATERSON AT THE GROWING VOICES EVENT

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/owen-paterson-speech-at-europabio>

PREVIOUS RESPONSE TO AN EIR REQUEST ON THE EUROPABIO EVENT CONTAINS RELEVANT INFORMATION

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-growing-voices-event>

EMAIL FROM BAYER TO DEFRA 21/1/14

Subject: Agenda and Bayer Attendees

Dear

We are very much looking forward to the event tomorrow. The coach will be outside the Renaissance Hotel, Rue du Parnasse 19, Brussels from 12:45 with an intention of leaving at 13:00. Hopefully we will arrive beforehand but our expectation is that the meeting in Ghent will start at 14:00. We would look to wrap up the meeting at 16:00 so as to ensure the Secretary of State successfully catches the 18:00 Eurostar from Brussels Midi.

As promised, an agenda

1) Welcome and presentation (max 40') to include

- Food !
- Crop Improvement Research @ the BCS Innovation Centre – Belgium
- Role of the Centre within Bayer CropScience
- The centre as part of the plant science hub in Gent

2) Tour of lab and greenhouse (45') to include

- An understanding of GM and non-GM breeding techniques
- A tour of the greenhouses to see plant breeding in action

3) Discussion and wrap-up (35') to include

- Bayer activities in Europe and our aspirations for the Seeds+traits side of the business
- Opportunities around the AgriTech strategy in the UK, and short review of activities already ongoing with UK universities/institutes/SMEs
- Potential wheat activity in the United Kingdom

Bart Lambert (our host) – he is one of our top scientists at Ghent with a specialism in oilseed rape and other brassicas

Lykele van der Broek – a member of the Bayer CropScience Executive Committee – he led the tour of the Monheim facility when the Secretary of State visited

Hartmut van Lengerich – responsible for global cereals and oilseeds crop strategy

Andrew Orme – Managing Director of Bayer CropScience in the UK – also present at the Monheim visit

Lisa Coen – global head of Public & Government Affairs – also present at the Monheim visit, and was at dinner with the Secretary of State in Berlin last week

Aneke Schwager – EU Public & Government Affairs Manager based in Brussels

Julian Little – UK Communications Manager and organiser of the event – also present at the Monheim visit

I will be contactable on my mobile on the day.

I hope this makes sense – please do not hesitate to contact me for any clarification or if I can help in any way

Best Regards

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE OWEN PATERSON TO BAYER CEO LIAM CONDON 12/10/2013

Finally I would be very interested in visiting your site in Ghent. I am frequently in Brussels for Council meetings, so it may be possible to arrange something around those dates. I would be grateful if my office could liaise with yours on potential dates.

(rest of the letter out of scope)