

## URBINO CONFERENCE

18/19 June 2009

### FINAL DECLARATION

Following the proceedings of the Urbino Conference, the **51 members** of the **GMO-free European Regions Network**, mindful of the principles and aspirations of the “*Florence Charter*” signed on February 4th 2005 and re-affirming the principles asserted in the “*Bilbao Declaration*” issued on April 25th 2008, **jointly declared** that:

- the EU Environment Council Conclusions on GMOs, adopted on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2008, are an important starting point to facilitate the identification of an European solution to define suitable coexistence solutions in different EU Countries and Regions;
- a socio-economic analysis of benefits and disbenefits of the introduction of GM crops, conducted at sub national level, should be preliminary to the introduction of GM crops in the local context. The recognition of the need for socio-economic factors by the European Council confirms our view that Regional Government should set up coexistence rules at territorial level. The farm scale level is not the optimal level to set up and apply coexistence rules;
- in order to develop a coexistence regime which limits the risk of contamination to conventional and organic agriculture from GM crops, National and Local Governments should be allowed to identify the sensitive areas which must be excluded from the cultivation of GM varieties;
- voluntary agreements for the creation of GM-free zones should be allowed on a majority basis rather than on the unanimity of stakeholders;
- in the light of recent scientific findings, the current environmental and health risk assessment process in the GMO authorisation procedure does not fully respect of the precautionary principle;
- the maximum level of transparency must be assured through the human health risk assessment process and relevant data and blood analysis derived from mammals feeding tests made available for independent review;
- EFSA must conduct specific, independent comparative trials and tests to support its opinion on the authorisation of a new GMO. The European legal framework should be modified accordingly, charging an authorisation fee on the applicants to cover the expenses;
- adequate labelling to identify non-GMO products must be considered at the European level. The European strategy to support the quality of European agricultural products should take this into account, as consumers are demanding non-GM foods;
- a European non GM feed market must also be preserved and valorised to support the point directly above.

In support of the above assertions and considering the need to answer the current economic crisis affecting the agriculture sector, and recognising the need for proactive local agricultural policies, the members of the GMO Free European Regions Network, subject to their means and institutional competences, are engaged to organise and promote the following activities:

- develop proposals to sustain GM-free areas within appropriate coexistence rules;
- encourage GM free labels based on non-GM feed use, including the development of short production chains for the supplying of vegetable proteins;

- develop and promote a contractual framework for the creation of GM-free voluntary agreements;
- consolidate the institutional relationships with European Institutions to support the European decision making process in the field of the GM authorisation, the labelling of non GM food and feed, the avoiding of admixture between non-GM and GM agricultural products.

Urbino, June 19<sup>th</sup> 2009

Urbino Declaration text: [www.gmofree-euregions.net](http://www.gmofree-euregions.net)