

Resolution on the proposal for a Council decision concerning the placing on the market for cultivation, in accordance with Directive 2001/18/EC, of a maize product (*Zea mays* L., line 1507) genetically modified for resistance to certain lepidopteran pests

2013/2974(RSP) - 16/01/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 385 votes to 200 with 30 abstentions a resolution tabled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, **opposing the proposal for a Council decision** concerning the placing on the market for cultivation, in accordance with Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of a maize product (*Zea mays* L., line 1507) genetically modified for resistance to certain lepidopteran pests. It considered that the proposal for a Council decision **exceeded the implementing powers conferred under Directive 2001/18/EC**, and called on the Council to reject the Commission proposal. Parliament considered that genetically modified maize 1507 offers no benefit to consumers.

Members noted that the provisions of the Directive required a decision on the deliberate release of a genetically modified organism (GMO) must explicitly specify conditions for the protection of particular ecosystems/environments and/or geographical areas. However, **such an indication is missing in the Commission proposal.**

In addition, the resolution noted the following:

- **EFSA risk assessment:** the European Food Safety Agency's (EFSA's) opinion of February 2012 explicitly disagreed with the applicant's (Pioneer) conclusion that the study cited by the applicant provided adequate evidence that maize 1507 poses a negligible risk to non-target lepidoptera in the EU, but instead pointed to the fact that **highly sensitive non-target butterflies and moths may be at risk when exposed to maize 1507 pollen.** It also noted that Pioneer refused, following a request by the Commission, to revise its application for authorisation and present additional documents regarding monitoring and riskmitigating measures for non-target organisms.
- **Glufosinate:** the EFSA acknowledged that in its risk assessment it did not consider potential risks linked to the other trait of maize 1507, namely its tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate ammonium even though this characteristic may result in increased use of glufosinate. In the United States and Canada, maize 1507 is marketed as a glufosinate-tolerant crop, while in the application in the EU the applicant argues that the gene for glufosinate tolerance was only to be used as a marker gene. **Glufosinate was classified as toxic to reproduction** and thus fell under the exclusion criteria set out in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. The approval of glufosinate expired in 2017 and Members noted that **the use of glufosinate should therefore in principle end in 2017.**

Parliament went on to recall that no GMO had been authorised for cultivation in the EU since 2010, when the Amflora potato was authorised. A large majority of consumers are concerned about genetically modified food, as indicated in Special Eurobarometer 354 of 2010. Accordingly, Parliament called on the

Commission **not to propose to authorise any new GMO variety and not to renew old ones** until the risk assessment methods, currently acknowledged inadequate, had been significantly improved.