

# Resolution on the draft Commission implementing decision concerning the placing on the market for cultivation of genetically modified maize Bt11 (SYN-BTØ11-1) seeds

2016/2919(RSP) - 06/10/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 386 votes to 190, with 35 abstentions, a resolution on the draft Commission implementing decision concerning the placing on the market for cultivation of **genetically modified maize Bt11** (SYN-BTØ11-1) seeds (D046173/01).

The resolution was tabled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Parliament expressed concern that maize Bt11 and maize 1507 could **harm “non-target” species of butterflies and moths**. It questioned the concept, introduced by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) of an **“acceptable local mortality”** of non-target lepidopteran species.

In its draft implementing decision, the Commission claimed that as regards local mortality, EFSA considered **two levels of ‘acceptable’ local mortality** (0.5 % and 1 %).

However, in its scientific opinion adopted on 28 May 2015 updating risk management recommendations to limit exposure of non-target lepidoptera of conservation concern in protected habitats to Bt-maize pollen, EFSA clearly stated that ‘any specific protection level used here for illustration by the EFSA GMO Panel is intended as an example only’ and that ‘any threshold applied here must, by necessity, be arbitrary and should be subject to amendment according to the protection goals in operation within the Union’.

Members highlighted the following issues:

- the Commission chose a **level of local mortality of below 0,5 %**, providing in the Annex for arbitrary isolation distances of at least 5 metres between a maize Bt11 field and a protected habitat, despite the fact that EFSA actually clearly stated as confirmed that imposing an isolation distance of 20 metres around a protected habitat from the nearest crop of maize Bt11/MON 810 would be expected to reduce local mortality even of extremely highly sensitive non-target lepidopteran larvae to a level below 0.5 %, that distance being **four times greater** than that proposed by the Commission.
- in its **scientific opinion adopted on 28 May 2015**, EFSA stated that ‘**currently, there are insufficient data available** to allow Bt-related larval mortality to be put into the context of overall mortality’.

On the basis of these considerations, Parliament considered that the draft Commission implementing decision **exceeds the implementing powers** provided for in Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms. It also considered that the risk assessment of cultivation conducted by EFSA is incomplete and the risk management recommendations proposed by the Commission are inadequate.

Therefore, it called on the Commission to **withdraw its draft implementing decision**.