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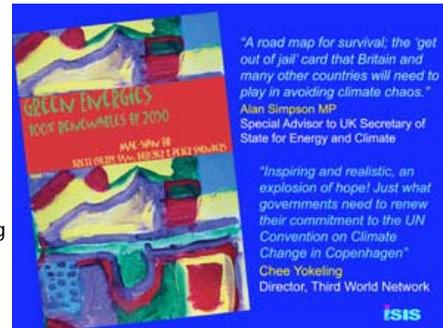
ISIS Report 26/01/11

Victory for Independent Science

World-famous independent scientist researching the risks of GMOs wins libel case against biotech association fronting a concerted campaign to discredit and victimise him [Dr. Mae-Wan Ho](#)

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Gilles-Eric Seralini, professor of molecular biology at the University of Caen in France, and president of the scientific council for independent research on genetic engineering (CRIIGEN), is a leading researcher into the risks of GMOs. Not surprisingly, he and his team became the target a concerted campaign of vilification, which included Monsanto, EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and scientific societies representing biotechnology in France: the French Association of Plant Biotechnology and the French High Counsel on Biotechnology (see [1] [Defend Gilles-Eric Seralini and Transparency in GMO Risk Assessment!](#) S/S 46).



"A road map for survival; the 'get out of jail' card that Britain and many other countries will need to play in avoiding climate chaos."
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This attach was triggered by the team's recent thorough re-analysis of data submitted by Monsanto to obtain commercial approval in Europe for three GM maize lines, MON 863, MON 810, NK603, on which EFSA had given a favourable opinion. In a published paper, the team concluded that the data "highlight signs of hepatorenal toxicity, possibly due to the new pesticides specific to each GM corn. In addition, unintended direct or indirect metabolic consequences of the genetic modification cannot be excluded."

Seralini and his colleagues received massive support from scientists and civil society. But Seralini decided to sue for libel; he believed the researchers Claude Allegre, Axel Kahn, and Marc Fellous were behind the defamation and intimidation campaign in France and that is why he pursued Fellous, who chairs the French Association of Plant Biotechnologies (AFBV), in the courts. Seralini argued that the campaign had damaged his reputation, reducing his opportunities for work and his chances of getting funding for his research [2].

On Tuesday 18 January 2011, the court of Paris concluded the lawsuit and decided in Seralini's favour, much to everyone's surprise [3].

During the trial, it transpired that Fellous, who presented himself as a 'neutral' scientist without personal interests, and accused those who criticise GMOs as 'ideological' and 'militant', actually owns patents through a company based in Israel. This company sells patents to corporations such as Aventis. Seralini's lawyer showed that various other AFBV members also have links with agribusiness companies, and so their scientific impartiality and integrity came under intense scrutiny.

The judge sentenced the AFBV to a fine on probation of €1 000, €1 for compensation (as requested by the plaintiff) and €4 000 in court fees.

Corinne Lepage, president of CRIIGEN, was delighted by the victory, as she stressed that she was not optimistic when leaving the first court session that had been held on 23 November 2010. "One cannot any longer say whatever one wants about whistleblower," she said. "It is the first time that a whistleblower is not on the defensive but on the offensive."

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Commenting on the court victory, Pete Riley of UK's GM Freeze said: "We warmly welcome this judgement and are delighted for Professor Séralini. Let's hope that we now see an end to the type of smear campaign we saw in this case and others over the last decade or so. Freedom of independent scientists to challenge the finding of scientific findings funded by an industry trying to sell seeds or chemicals is a vital element. The history of technological disaster tells us that industry and regulators are the last people to recognise and admit there is a problem. We fully support Séralini's right to pursue his research on GM crops and wish him more power."

Dr Brian John of GM-Free Cymru said: "This is a very gratifying outcome to a case which would never have been necessary had the GM industry followed long-standing traditions of respect for fellow scientists and honest debates with academics whose views, and research findings, do not coincide with theirs. For years now, the industry and its apologists have indulged in the vilification and intimidation of those who have the temerity to question the safety of GM products... Some quite senior academics working for the GM industry have behaved more like thugs than scientists. Their philosophy has always been to "shoot the messenger." Their list of victims is a long one: Arpad Pusztai, Ignacio Chapela and David Quist, Irina Ermakova, Judy Carman, Manuela Malatesta, Andres Carrasco, and many others.

"We congratulate Prof. Séralini for having the courage to stand his ground and fight back. Let's hope his success will make GM multinationals and the regulators give independent scientists the respect that they deserve."

More importantly, our regulators should take heed of Séralini's findings and those of other independent scientists around the world in their persistent efforts to foist GMOs on the people.

References

1. Ho MW and Saunders PT. Defend Giles-Eric Séralini and transparency in GMO risk assessment. [Science in Society](#) 46, 4, 2010.
2. "Séralini vs Fellous: a GMO libel case over independent expertise and science" Corporate Europe Observatory, 9 December 2010, <http://www.corporateeurope.org/agribusiness/content/2010/12/seralini-vs-fellous-gmo-libel-case>
3. "Independent GM researcher wins court victory for defamation", GM Free Cymru, Press Notice, 19 January 2011, via GM Watch www.gmwatch.org

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[Clare Dimmer](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:18
 Congratulations! This is fantastic news - but the Establishment will fight back with all the money and media power they can muster - guaranteed! If not I'll eat my (organic!) hat.

[Prof Amyan Macfadyen](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:38
 Hearty congratulations to Professor Séralini on his victory and to the impartiality of the French justice system.

[susan](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:00
 Foist gmo's on people was not necessarily the goal. World domination putting these corporations at war with governments, science and citizens is. <http://www.truth-out.org/wikileaks-us-ambassador-planned-retaliation-against-france-over-ban-monsanto-corn66131> Anyone who has been involved in activism, independent science and farming has been a target.

[Todd Millions](#) Comment left 27th January 2011 09:09:42
 Good show-The Israeli patent connection needs more exploring. That and the popes secret support for GMO(wiki leaks-apparently he's using his council on social issues too lube this-not the science council. May all the little crawling one true gods save us from the qualified opinions of the holy sociologists!). I suspect the EU trade negotiations with Canada- may be angling for nafta style chapter 11 ish exemptions for GM crops and products. I would advise more efforts on ferreting out if this is the case-and have appropriate responses on hand for such an announcement. Bon Chance

[Rory Short](#) Comment left 27th January 2011 09:09:34
 More strength to Prof. Seralini and it seems that the French legal system succeeds at being fair and balanced. I am delighted.

[Doreen Flanagan](#) Comment left 4th February 2011 11:11:50
 Having suffered the effects of Monsanto's Roundup used like perfume around the village where I live, I congratulate Professor Seralini, and all those good people working with him, and send love and blessings.

membership fees, [subscriptions](#), and [merchandise](#) sales to continue its work. Find out more about membership [here](#)

[Gene E Sperling](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:15

Hurray! I dream of the day that the United States comes to their senses and recognizes the need for independent research on GM crops and pesticides. We remain helplessly on the edge of a precipice, with a President readying an approval for Monsanto to begin marketing Round-up ready alfalfa. Until the time of our awakening we remain allied with the rest of 'the third world' countries helplessly captured by Corporations/Politicians. Chees, Gene Sperling, Environmental Pharmacist

[Mr Anupam Paul](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:08

Its a great victory for the independent non- corporate scientific communities,farmers,common people and the mother earth as well. During the middle ages science was controlled by the church and at present it has been replaced by the corporates.People are given to understand that they only understand science as they pour huge amount of fund in the institutes and influence the policy makers to speak in favour of their product in the name of science.

[gyorgyi baunok](#) Comment left 26th January 2011 22:10:01

Bravo! GMO foods absolute deadly ,because our tomic "bugs"have to "remodel"themselves to be able to dealing with the altered foods. Long run:we all people in the Earth can die from it!!! thank You GB

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