

European Green Party Congress

Rome, 20th - 22nd February 2004

Accepted resolution

For a GMO free Maltese Archipelago

The Islands of Malta and Gozo being naturally isolated by the sea, while enjoying a relatively higher rate of biodiversity due to this very isolation from the mainland should be preserved as a haven for the cultivation of non-GM products which must continue to be made available to the European consumer if the freedom of individual choice between organic, conventional and genetically modified food products is to continue.

As the current drive to conduct research on GM crops and their effect on ecosystems with an agenda favouring co-existence is spreading to the candidate countries, Malta which is a small island state, is unable to contain buffer zones of a size provisionally considered adequate to ensure against gene contamination of neighbouring crops, being a total area of barely over 300 square kilometers shared by the three main islands.

Procedures to accept applications for deliberate release of GMOs are currently in the process of being rapidly installed by the Maltese authorities. This presents an emergency situation. The European Greens meeting in Congress in Rome call on the Maltese Government to immediately declare the Maltese islands a GMO-free zone in order to stand by the precautionary principle while keeping some areas of the European Union free of GM experiments as a safety measure.

On a national level the medicinal value of indigenous plants has not yet been fully explored while Mediterranean seeds of wild and cultivated plants are at risk unless safeguarded under a zone ruling.

This measure is to be taken into account in the context of Commissioner Franz Fischler's statement last week considering the islands' very specific situation, whereby the EU Agriculture Commissioner is prepared to view Malta as an exceptional case.