
Letter from the NGOs to the MOP 4 of the COP 9 of the CBD

To the Official Delegations of the IV Meeting of the Parties of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (MOP-4) and IX Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-9)

Dear Sir / Madam,

We, representatives of different sectors of the global civil society and aware of the relevance of the topics to be treated during the MOP-4/COP-9 negotiations - of which you will be part - would like to inform you about our firm opposition towards any decision that may facilitate or justify the promotion of agrofuels, genetically modified (GM) trees and Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs) based on the following considerations:

- Agrofuels do not contribute to solve the problem of global warming. On the contrary, they generate much higher volumes of greenhouse gases than fossil fuels. Agrofuel production is based on intensive agricultural systems implemented through vast extensions of monocultures (much of them based on genetically modified crops) at the expense of largescale deforestation; soil, water and biodiversity pollution and degeneration due to high applications of toxic agrochemicals (fertilizers and pesticides); and intensive use of energy and water resources during its conversion into fuels, among others.
- The production of agrofuels in developing countries implies profound socio- economic problems such as substitution of land use (agrofuels instead of food) and the consequent shortage of food; expulsion (in many cases using violence) of farmers and indigenous communities from their lands due to the expansion of agricultural borders; concentration of power in few corporations; and general weakening of local agricultural food systems.
- GM trees are part of the so-called “second generation of agrofuels” which not only cause severe ecological damage on complex ecosystems, such as forests, and profound socioeconomic problems (as mentioned above); but they also imply the depletion of water resources and an irreversible imbalance of the agricultural and forest ecosystems.
- Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs), also called Terminator Technology, will not solve the problem of the genetic contamination caused by GM organisms, which means that they are not an adequate strategy for biological containment. Since GURTs produce sterile seed which cultivation relies on intensive use of synthetic agrochemicals to activate (or deactivate) certain plant

characteristics, it becomes a mechanism for seed and food control by corporative firms. Consequently, GURTs threaten the local food systems and traditional knowledge. In addition, they exacerbate the dependence on external agricultural inputs and depletion of natural resources (including genetic erosion).

- Concluding, agrofuels, GM trees and GURTs imply the weakening of food sovereignty, contamination and loss of local (agro) - biodiversity and its related traditional knowledge, concentration of power on transnational corporative firms, contamination of natural resources, and general degradation of the local ecological and socio-economic systems.

These new technologies are intimately related and are part of the same production package, which has proven to be contaminating and destructive. Therefore, we DEMAND from the official delegations a position and vote that guarantees the conservation of the different forms of life of our planet and health of the global community, by REJECTING any proposal that directly or indirectly facilitates or promotes the production of agrofuels, GM trees and the end of the moratorium on GURTs.

[See here the list of signatures](#)