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French Government's ban on strain of GM corn is important step in right direction

EU Commission must now stand up to bullying from multinationals

The Spokespersons of the European Green Party today welcomed the decision by the French government to continue to ban a strain of genetically modified corn, the only GM crop grown in France, and expressed the hope that this decision will bring us closer to removing GM crops from the EU .

EGP Co-Spokesperson Philippe Lamberts said: "The decision by the French government to invoke the EU safeguard clause to ban the Monsanto 810 strain of GM corn is an important victory for the French Greens (Les Verts) and other activists in France who have been campaigning against the introduction of GM crops because of the serious dangers to human health and the environment which these crops represent. However, we must point out that this decision should have been taken much earlier. Nevertheless, we call on other EU governments to follow the example of the French government and the other 6 EU member states which have also used the safeguard clause. "

EGP Co-Spokesperson Ulrike Lunacek continued: "We hope that those member states that have shown that they recognise that GM crops are inherently unsafe will work together so that a majority of EU member states can be persuaded to support a EU-wide ban on the import, cultivation and processing of GM crops. In the meantime, it is vitally important that the EU does not bow to the pressure and bullying of the World Trade Organisation which is trying to force the EU to end restrictions on imports of genetically modified foods. My own country, Austria, has imposed a total ban on the

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cultivation of GM organisms and we European Greens argue that the Commission, rather than forcing Austria to remove this ban, must take a tough stance and withhold approval for the planting of other strains of GM corn. Public opinion polls consistently show that most Europeans oppose the presence of GM organisms, both in the food chain and in the environment. It is now up to the Commission and the EU member states to defend the interests of European consumers against multinational agrochemical companies who are only interested in increasing their own profits, regardless of the serious threats their products pose to public health and the environment."
