

GMO - Free Malawi



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THE GMO AGENDA MALAWI CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION

Commons for EcoJustice
bmphiri@live.com

May 2015

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The GMO-Free Malawi

- ✓ a platform of individuals, farmer groups, organisations, networks and faith-based institutions who share common environmental, safety and scientific concerns of GMO crops in general and unify their voice to advance a campaign against any intent by profit-oriented entities to introduce GMOs in Malawi.
- ✓ Working in close partnership with AFSA and international organisations specialised in Biosafety & scientific know-how (TWN)
- ✓ Facebook page: GMO-Free Malawi

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THE BOLLGARD II EVENT

- ✓ Public notice published in local newspaper on 22 May 2014 in accordance with the Biosafety Act No 13 of 2014
- ✓ 30 days window period given to public to submit comments
- ✓ Wrong email address and contact details used in the public notice – undermining the right to administrative justice and compromised the very purpose of soliciting comments from the public
- ✓ Civil Society coalition lodged a challenge to vacate to the public notice.

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- ✓ The non-confidential PDF version of the dossier not placed in the public domain
- ✓ Civil Society coalition lodged a challenge to vacate to the public notice. Application granted and extension given until 04 July 2014 for submission of comments.
- ✓ Civil Society consensus building workshops organised to understand and analyze the Monsanto application; share lessons and experiences from the region; and develop a civil society position.

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THE OBJECTION

- ✓ CSOs collectively identified key issues of the application -formulated of a unified position in form of an objection based on scientific, socio-economic, environmental and administrative justice grounds.
- ✓ Objection demonstrated that the application is legally not justifiable and fails short to comply with both good biosafety practice and therefore no basis for the applicant to release MON 15985 cotton traits in Malawi.

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KEY ISSUES RAISED!!!!

- ✓ No cost-benefit analysis has been carried out to support Monsanto's claims that this technology will benefit cotton farmers in Malawi
- ✓ Issues of secondary pests, exposure pathways and pest resistance need to be dealt with by the application substantively
- ✓ Safety and environmental risks have not been adequately addressed by the Monsanto application and there is simply no baseline data

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KEY ISSUES RAISED!!!!

- ✓ local field trial data on MON 15985, conducted at the Bunda College of Agriculture inaccessible & out of the public domain
- ✓ Issues of liability and redress which have been ignored by the application
- ✓ Application lacks safeguards for the existing PPP - Cotton made in Africa project involving the German government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation which specifically prohibits the use of GM cotton (serious concerns about the impact GM contamination may have on the workings and future of the project)

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KEY ISSUES RAISED!!!!

- ✓ Objection appealed to government to dismiss the Monsanto application; suspend the Confined Field Trials (CFT) permit granted to Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Bunda College); and decommission the confined field trials for B) cotton being conducted at Bunda college.
- ✓ Objection and press release on civil society position given media coverage and publicity by networks and various platforms and can be downloaded at www.cisanetmw.org./index.php/events1.

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NULLIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION

- ✓ It emerged that Government of Malawi referred the Monsanto dossier to COMESA for expert advice.
- ✓ Civil society under the leadership of EcoJustice contested this strategy of assessment and review and applied for a complete cancellation of the application.
- ✓ Application was granted in December 2015. Monsanto was ordered to make fresh application and issue fresh public notice.

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NEW PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLISHED

- ✓ New public notice and a clarification from the office of the Biosafety Registrar published in local newspapers on 04 May 2015
- ✓ Non-confidential version PDF version of the new application not yet in the public domain
- ✓ Concerns already raised with government on lack of access to public information (the dossier)
- ✓ We have acquired records of the correspondence between government and Monsanto through our own means....more needs to be probed on the process that has led to the re-publication of the notice.

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IMPACT OF GMO CROPS ON ORGANIC FARMING

- ✓ Furthermore, most of the GM crops being developed contain “stacked traits”, meaning that they contain multiple Bt and herbicide tolerant genes. The increased complexity of these crops and the increased number of gene insertions needed to create them present major biosafety risks, concerns and challenges.
- ✓ Not only are GMOs prohibitive monocultures, but they also require a complete shift from needs-based farming practices and have conflicting objectives with organic farming while marginalizing farmer knowledge and seed systems.

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ZIKOMO!!!!