

# GMO: Acute Crisis in Brussels

Translated from [Le Nouvel Observateur](#)<sup>i</sup> by Liza Cobb

The dialogue between the director of European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and Gilles-Eric Séralini, author of the study on [GMO maize NK603](#)<sup>ii</sup>, came to an abrupt halt. Heard by a handful of European members of Parliament in Brussels in the presence of Gilles-Eric Séralini, author of the impact study on NK603 maize, director Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle has confirmed that her agency would indeed carry out the review of the study. But keeping the same experts who had given the green light to the same NK603 maize in the past.

Gilles-Eric Séralini reacted strongly: "There is no way that those who have authorized NK603 could carry out a reassessment of our data. There would be a conflict of interest between their authority and their career". Particularly as the [conflicts of interest within EFSA](#)<sup>iii</sup> and inside the "GMO Panel", were so numerous, added study co-author Dr Joël Spiroux.

Summary: Gilles-Eric Séralini agrees to an EFSA assessment, on the condition that the experts be replaced in such a manner that these [the current ones] are not put into a position of having to contradict themselves. The EFSA director will not hear of it. She refuses to replace her experts. Her position is, "I stand by it all".

## Total Impasse in Brussels

Corinne Lepage, MEP and head of the Environmental Committee of the Parliament in Strasbourg, is very angry. Especially as she was given another outright refusal regarding her proposal that EFSA conduct studies comparable to Séralini's -- lifespan studies on rats.

Corinne Lepage says, "Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle's response was that three-month or case-by-case studies were sufficient. This is intolerable ! We're going in circles again!"

The impasse is therefore total, for in order to successfully complete its review, EFSA needs Gilles-Eric Séralini to give them the raw data from his study. All in all, he said he preferred an "international review" to remove all suspicions.

## ANSES as Referee

The EFSA director's intransigence illustrates Brussels' extremely delicate position. Between the precautionary principle governing European law, international trade regulations, and pressure from the US, the road is narrow. All the more narrow since Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault hardened his line by declaring "If the danger of GMO NK603 were confirmed, France would defend its ban at the European level". [This ban is] based on the opinion of ANSES (French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety). [Upholding it would imply the dismissal] of EFSA's opinion....

When the "Nouvel Observateur" announced, following the publication of Séralini's study, that the crisis would be political, scientific, and health-related, we were close enough to the truth. A Franco-European crisis is now looming. Tonight the first private screening of Jean-Paul Jaud's film «All Guinea Pigs?» is taking place, adapted from Gilles-Eric Séralini's book. It doesn't take a genius to predict that the tension will be ratcheted up another notch.

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<sup>i</sup> Seralini *et al.* 2012 [http://wikispooks.com/w/images/f/f7/Toxicity\\_of\\_Roundup\\_and\\_Roundup-tolerant\\_GM\\_maize.pdf](http://wikispooks.com/w/images/f/f7/Toxicity_of_Roundup_and_Roundup-tolerant_GM_maize.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/ogm-le-scandale/20120920.OBS3127/ogm-crise-aigue-a-bruxelles.html>

<sup>iii</sup> <http://corporateeurope.org/pressreleases/2012/conflicts-interest-still-evident-new-esfa-expert-panels>