

A Call to Protect Food Systems from Genetic Extinction Technology: The Global Food and Agriculture Movement Says NO to Release of Gene Drives

Gene drives are new tools that force genetically engineered traits through entire populations of insects, plants, animals and other organisms. This invasive technology represents a deliberate attempt to create a new form of genetic pollution. Gene Drives may drive species to extinction and undermine sustainable and equitable food and agriculture.

Gene drives threaten natural systems. If released experimentally into the environment they may spread engineered genes uncontrollably through wild and domesticated species. This could alter ecological systems and food webs, harm biodiversity and eradicate beneficial organisms such as pollinators. Gene drives could disrupt lands, waters, food and fiber economies and harm Indigenous and peasant agroecological practices and cultures.

Gene drives are being developed for use in agriculture. If applied, they may make farms even more genetically uniform and foreclose farmers' rights, as enshrined, among others, in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas. Use of gene drives may further entrench a system of genetically-engineered industrial agriculture, extend agro-toxin use and concentrate corporate control over global food systems, undermining the food sovereignty of farmers, food workers and consumers. Gene drives hinder the realization of human rights including rights to healthy, ecologically-produced and culturally appropriate food and nutrition.

We, the undersigned, call for a global moratorium on any release of engineered gene drives. This moratorium is necessary to affirm the precautionary principle, which is enshrined in international law, and to protect life on Earth as well as our food supply.

Letter continued on next page...

Organizational signatories include:



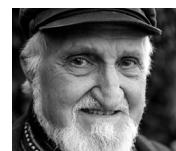
Individual signatories include:



Vandana Shiva



Olivier de Schutter



José Esquinas



Hilal Elver



Karin Nansen



Mariann Bassey



Tom Goldtooth



Nnimmo Bassey



Hans Herren



Pat Mooney



David Suzuki



Jean Ziegler

See following pages for the full list of signatories to date.

We urge governments to establish participatory technology assessment processes and to respect and fulfill the full free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and other affected populations for all emerging biotechnologies, including gene drives - as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other international agreements. This is to protect our rights to preserve biodiversity and traditional knowledge.

We oppose current experiments to 'test' risky transgenic organisms as a step towards future release of gene drive organisms.¹

We commit ourselves to the protection of food systems, cultures, ecosystems and the rights, livelihoods and food sovereignty of those who work in and depend on agriculture and food production.

Join the growing list of those opposing gene drives in agriculture.

If your organization would like to sign on please email: genedrives@synbiowatch.org to add your or your organization's name.



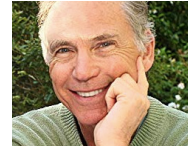
Wenonah Hauter



Juliette Majot



Anna Lappé



John Robbins



Raj Patel



Wes Jackson



Nell Newman



Barbara Unmüßig



Million Belay



Chee Yoke Ling

International and Regional Organizations

IFOAM Organics International

IFOAM Asia

IFOAM Europe

IFOAM North America

Global Forest Coalition

Third World Network

Forest Peoples Programme

IUF International (The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations)

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Navdanya International

Indigenous Environmental Network

FIAN International

La Via Campesina International

Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration (ETC Group) (Canada)

Alianza por la Biodiversidad en América Latina

Focus on the Global South

¹ The multi-million dollar 'Target Malaria' project from London, UK is currently releasing non-gene drive transgenic mosquitoes in West Africa as a means to 'test' the regulatory systems for a future release of gene-drive equipped mosquitoes.

Africa

Health of Mother Earth Foundation, HOMEF (Nigeria)

Biowatch South Africa (South Africa)

PELUM Kenya (Kenya)

Earth Life Africa (South Africa)

African Center for Biodiversity- ACB (South Africa)

Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)

African Biodiversity Network (ABN)

Association Ouest Africaine pour le Développement de la Pêche Artisanale (ADEPA)

Biodiversity and Biosafety Coalition of Kenya (BIBA)

Coalition pour la Protection du Patrimoine Génétique Africaine (COPAGEN)

Comité Ouest Africain de Semences Paysannes (COASP)

Comparing and Supporting Endogenous Development (COMPAS Africa)

Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF)

Eastern and Southern African Pastoralists Network

Fahamu Africa

Faith & Justice Network of the Mano River Basin (FJN)

Farm-Saved Seeds Network (FASSNET)

Fédération Agroécologique du Bénin (FAEB)

Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in West Africa (FECCIWA)

Friends of the Earth Africa (FoEA)

Friends of the Earth Cameroon/ Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement

Friends of the Earth Ghana/ Environmental Rights Action (ERA)

Friends of the Earth Togo/ Les Amis de la Terre Togo

Friends of the Earth Mozambique/ Justica Ambiental (JA!)

Friends of the Earth Uganda/ NAPE (National Association of Professional Environmentalists)

Friends of the Earth Liberia/ Sustainable Development Institute (SDI)

Friends of the Earth Sierra Leone

Groundwork/Friends of the Earth South Africa

Lawyers' Environmental Action Team (LEAT)/Friends of the Earth Tanzania

Guamina / Friends of the Earth Mali

Groundswell West Africa (GWA)

Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et Social (INADES-Formation)

Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC)

Institut Panafricain pour la Citoyenneté, les Consommateurs et le Développement (CICODEV Africa)

Jinkun (reseau National Pour Une Gestion Durable Des Ressources Génétiques)

Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement (JVE International)

La Via Campesina Africa (LVC Africa)

Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA)

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Association

Plate-forme Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC)

Réseau Africain pour le Droit à l'Alimentation (RAPDA -Togo)

Rural Women's Assembly (RWA)

Tanzanian Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO)

Union Africaine des Consommateurs (UAC)

World Neighbours

Terre à Vie (Burkina Faso)

Maudesco/Friends of the Earth Mauritius

Asia/ Oceania

Mothers Against Genetic Engineering- MADGE (Australia)

GM-Free Australia Alliance (Australia)

Pesticide Action Group WA (Australia)

FoodWatch WA (Australia)

Gene Ethics (Australia)

Environment Support Group (India)

Hazards Centre (Sanchal Foundation) (India)

GE FREE NZ Taitokerau (New Zealand)

GE FREE New Zealand (New Zealand)

La Via Campesina-South Asia

Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (South Korea, Right Livelihood Award 2003)

SEARICE - Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment

UBINIG (Bangladesh)

Friends of the Earth Australia (Australia)

Europe

Biofuelwatch (United Kingdom)

Initiative for GE-free Seeds and Breeding (Germany)

Kultursaat e.V. (Germany)

Family Farmers Organization Germany (Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (AbL) e.V.) (Germany)

A Sud - Ecologia e Cooperazione ONLUS (Italy)

Slow Food Deutschland (Germany)

Foundation on Future Farming (Germany)

Save our Seeds (Germany)

GM Watch UK (United Kingdom)

Pole-Risques (France)

Sativa Rheinau AG (Switzerland)

ReinSaat KG (Austria)

Forschung & Züchtung Dottenfelderhof ('Research & Breeding Dottenfelderhof') (Germany)

Swiss Alliance for GE Free Agriculture (Switzerland)

We Effect (Sweden)

ELTE Nature Conservation Club (Hungary)

Friends of the Earth France/ les Amis de la Terre

Friends of the Earth Bosnia and Herzegovina/ Centar za zivotnu sredinu

Friends of the Earth Germany/ Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND)

Corporate Europe Observatory

Science citoyennes (France)

Latin America

Acción Ecológica (Ecuador)
Associação Brasileira de Agroecologia (Brasil)
Via Organica (Mexico)
CESTA Amigos de la Tierra El Salvador (El Salvador)
Centro Ecológico (Brazil)

Asociación Red de Coordinación en Biodiversidad
Iniciativa Amotocodie (Paraguay)
Heñoi (Paraguay)
REDES-AT, REDES-Amigos de la Tierra (Uruguay)
Instituto de Estudios Ecologistas, (Ecuador)

Instituto de Salud Socioambiental de la Facultad de Cs. Médicas, UNR, (Argentina)
BASE-IS, (Paraguay)

North America

Hawai'i SEED (US)
Non-GMO Project (US)
Nature's Path Food Inc. (US)
Natural Grocers (US)
Organic Seed Alliance (US)
National Farmers Union (Canada)
Farm Aid (US)
RAFI USA (US)
Community Alliance for Global Justice (US)
BioScience Resource Project (US)
Food Integrity Now (US)
Moms Across America (US)
Nutiva (US)
Organics Consumer Association (US)

Canada Organic Trade Association (Canada)
Vigilance OGM (Canada)
Fair World Project (US)
Friends of the Earth US
Dr. Bronner's (US)
Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (US)
Urban Tilth (US)
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) (US)
USC Canada (Canada)
Movement Generation (US)
The National Organic Coalition (US)
HEAL Food Alliance (US)
Food and Water Watch (US)

Northeast Organic Farmers Association: New Jersey / Vermont / Inter State Council / Connecticut / Massachusetts / and New Hampshire (US)
National Family Farm Coalition (US)
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners (MOFGA) (US)
Next7 (US)
Food Secure Canada (Canada)
Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN)
Family Farm Defenders (US)
The Land Institute
The Oakland Institute

Individual signatories so far

Vandana Shiva *Navdanya International, Activist, Scholar, Author, Right Livelihood laureate (1993)*

Caroline Lucas *Member of Parliament Green Party, United Kingdom*

Hilal Elver *United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (current)*

Jean Ziegler *United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (2000-2008), Vice-president of the Advisory Committee to the United Nations Human Rights Council*

Bob Scowcroft *Co-founder, Executive Director, Organic Farming Research Foundation (retired)*

Nell Newman *President, Nell Newman Foundation*

Tom Goldtooth *Executive Director, Indigenous Environmental Network*

Thuli Makama *Swaziland, 2010 Recipient Goldman Environmental Prize*

Chee Yoke Ling *Director, Third World Network*

David Suzuki *Geneticist, Environmentalist and Broadcaster*

Claire Hope Cummings *Writer, Broadcaster, Environmental Lawyer*

Anna Lappé *Co-founder Small Planet Institute, Real Food Media*

Severine Von Tscherner Fleming *Founder, Greenhorns*

Lauren Baker *Professor, University of Toronto*

Raj Patel *Writer, Activist, Academic, IPES-Food panel member*

Ocean Robbins *Co-founder and CEO, Food Revolution Network*

John Robbins *Author, Founder EarthSave*

Million Belay *Founder, Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), IPES-Food panel member*

Nicolas Bricas *Senior Scientist at CIRAD, IPES-Food panel member*

Hans Herren *Millennium Institute, World Food Prize winner (1995), Right Livelihood laureate (2013), IPES-Food panel member*

Steve Gliessman *Founding Director of the University of California Santa Cruz, Agroecology Program, IPES-Food panel member*

Pat Mooney *Co-Founder ETC Group, Right Livelihood Award laureate (1985), IPES-Food panel member*

Olivier de Schutter *United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (2008-2014), Co-chair IPES-Food*

Lim Li Ching *Senior Researcher, Third World Network, IPES-Food panel member*

Phil Howard *Author, IPES-Food panel member*

Jennifer Franco *Transnational Institute, IPES-Food panel member*

Yan Hairong *Hong Kong Polytechnic University, IPES-Food panel member*

Joji Carino *Forest Peoples Programme, IPES-Food panel member*

Will Allen *Farmer, Activist*

Individual signatories so far (continued)

Jose “Pepe” Esquinas *Professor, Former Secretary, Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources, Former Secretary of FAO’s Commission on Genetic Resources*

Ida Kuklina *(Russia), The Committee of Soldiers’ Mothers of Russia, Right Livelihood Award 1996*

Swami Agnivesh *(India), Right Livelihood Award 2004*

Angie Zelter *(UK), Right Livelihood Award 2001*

Nnimmo Bassey *(Nigeria), Right Livelihood Award 2010*

Anwar Fazal *(Malaysia), Right Livelihood Award 1982*

Manfred Max Neef *(Chile), Right Livelihood Award 1983*

Zafrullah Chowdhury *(India), Right Livelihood Award 1992*

Raul Montenegro *(Argentina), Right Livelihood Award 2004*

Annelis Allain for IBFAN *(international), Right Livelihood Award 1998*

Martin Almada *(Paraguay), Right Livelihood Award 2002*

Dipal Barua *(Bangladesh), Grameen Shakti, Right Livelihood Award 2007*

Ruchama Marton *(Israel), Physicians for Human Rights, Right Livelihood Award 2010*

Shrikrishna Upadhyay / SAPPROS *(Nepal), Right Livelihood Award 2010*

Martin von Hildebrand *COAMA, Right Livelihood Award 1999*

Wes Jackson *(USA), Right Livelihood Award 2000*

Erik Damman / The Future in our Hands *Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1982*

David Bronner *CEO, Dr. Bronner*

Wenonah Hauter *Executive Director, Food and Water Watch, Author*

Thierry Kesteloot *Policy Advisor, Oxfam Germany*

Gustavo Esteva *Founder, Universidad de la Tierra (Uniterra)*

Maurizio Farhan Ferrari *Biodiversity Policy Advisor, Forest Peoples Programme*

Karin Nansen *Chair, Friends of the Earth International*

Silvia Rodríguez *Emeritus Professor, Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica*

Damián Verzeñassi *Director of the Institute of Social and Environmental Health, Universidad del Rosario, Argentina*

Emmanuel González-Ortega *Doctor of Biotechnology, Biosecurity, National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change and Union of Scientists Committed to Society (UCCS)*

Elizabetta Recine *Coordinator of the Observatory of Food Security and Nutrition Policy- Universidade de Brasília*

Rubens Nodari *Professor, Universidad Santa Catarina, Brazil*

Juliette Majot *Executive Director, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)*

Jaime E. García González, sc.agr. *Profesor, Catedrático de la Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED) y de la Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR)*

Elizabeth Bravo *Founding member, Acción Ecológica, Senior Fellow, Oakland Institute, Instituto de Estudios Ecologistas*

Brian Baker *President, IFOAM North America*

Andrew Mushita *Executive Director, Community Technology Development Trust (Zimbabwe)*

Beth Burrows *Retired President/Director, Edmonds Institute*

Didi Pershouse *Soil Carbon Coalition, Founder, Center for Sustainable Medicine*

Aruna Rodrigues *Sunray Harvesters*

Uma Shankari Naren *Author and activist*

Suma Josson *Documentary film maker*

Bart Staes *European Member of Parliament, Greens/European Free Alliance*

Maria José Guazzelli *Co-director Centro Ecológico, Brasil*

Simone Lovera *Executive Director Global Forest Coalition, Paraguay*

Leonardo Melgarejo *Vice-president of the Associação Brasileira de Agroecologia, Região Sul, Brasil*

Miguel Lovera *Author, former Director of National Seed Institute, Paraguay*

Pablo Galeano *Facultad de Química, UDELAR, Uruguay*

Marielle Palau *Director BASE-IS, Paraguay*

María Fernanda Vallejo *Researcher agroecological systems, Ecuador*

Barbara Unmüßig *President, Heinrich Böll Foundation*