

## Ecocide hysteria: Nassim Taleb may be risk expert but doesn't understand science of GMOs

Nassim Taleb, one of my favorite authors and thought donors alive today, is making my efforts to spread knowledge about the benefits of genetic engineering pretty difficult. It may be easy to dismiss Taleb by saying he doesn't understand biology and leave it at that, but that's not a productive argument. Let's review what he is and isn't saying about GMOs.

Taleb argues that the chance of ecocide, or the destruction of the environment and potentially humans, increases incrementally with each additional transgenic trait introduced into the environment. He's not saying that human ignorance to the potential risks presented by GMOs will doom the planet by 8:34 a.m. on Aug. 13, 2082 — choreographing potential events as absolute certainties as many financial pundits do. Nor is he specifying which trait or traits will combine to cause which specific environmental disaster. Taleb doesn't deal in specifics; he deals in probability, but that doesn't take away from the validity of his argument. He's simply saying that given enough time and enough new traits (or ignorance) something big, such as ecocide, is almost guaranteed to occur.

Either way, it's wrong and irresponsible to suggest that an ecocide caused from GMOs could wipe out life on Earth. It only works to foster a mistrust in science and adds no value to the broader debate. Then again, I suppose Taleb could argue that just because life hasn't been wiped out by a genetic calamity in the past, whether created by man or nature, doesn't mean the probability of the event occurring is zero. That's the problem with arguing against probability theory.

**Read the full, original article:** [Is Nassim Taleb Right About Monsanto Company and GMOs?](#)