

European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER): Anti-GMO scientists' advocacy organization

The European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER) was founded on August 27, 2009. It states its mission as:

The objective of ENSSER is the advancement of public-good science and research for the protection of the environment, biological diversity and human health against adverse impacts of new technologies and their products.

ENSSER promotes the critical European and international discourse on new technologies, their impacts and their regulation. As scientific and technological advances, are increasingly driven by private interest, health and environmental safety information needs often lag behind. As a result, the relationship between science, society and environment in science policy should be restructured to better protect the public interest.

As of 2013 ENSSER reported about 70 “signatory” members from various NGOs, organic associations and academic institutions (see key member list below). Its primary mission appears to be to position itself as a legitimate NGO challenging the scientific consensus of more than 270 organizations and agencies around the world, including the European Commission and every major academy of science in the world, that have issued statements saying crops developed using genetic engineering were as safe or safer, and at times more sustainable, than conventional or organic crops. It lobbies against GMOs “in cooperation with Greenpeace EU, Friends of the Earth and the Greens/AFA in the EP (European Parliament) and is funded through annual dues and foundation support.^[1]

HISTORY

From ENSSER: The European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER) is a non-profit association registered under German law. The purpose of ENSSER is, “the advancement of science and research for the protection of the environment, biological diversity and human health against negative impacts of new technologies and their products. This especially includes the support and protection of independent and critical research to advance the scientific assessment of the potentially negative impacts. The purpose of the by-laws is the realization of research projects, the award of research assignments to third parties, the realization of scientific events, presentation and discussion of scientific work to the relevant audience, and the advancement of the European and international discourse on the risks and benefits of new technologies and on their regulation.”

ORGANIZATION

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CAMPAIGNS / ACTIVITIES

October 2013 Statement Against Scientific Consensus on GM Safety

[No scientific consensus on safety of genetically modified organisms October 21, 2013:](#)

There is no scientific consensus on the safety of genetically modified foods and crops, according to a statement released today by an international group of more than 90 scientists, academics and physicians.¹ [signatures of first 93 supporters]

The statement comes in response to recent claims from the GM industry and some scientists, journalists, and commentators that there is a 'scientific consensus' that GM foods and crops were generally found safe for human and animal health and the environment.

The statement calls these claims 'misleading', adding, "This claimed consensus on GMO safety does not exist. ... Such claims may place human and environmental health at undue risk and create an atmosphere of complacency," stated Dr. Angelika Hilbeck, chairperson of the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER) and one of the signatories.

"The statement draws attention to the diversity of opinion over GMOs in the scientific community and the often contradictory or inconclusive findings of studies on GMO safety. These include toxic effects on laboratory animals fed GM foods, increased pesticide use from GM crop cultivation, and the unexpected

impacts of Bt insecticidal crops on beneficial and non-target organisms,” Dr Hilbeck continued.”

Heinemann dispute with GenOK

The 2012 ENSSER published board meeting notes state:

Attendance: Rosa Binimelis, Claudia Neubauer, David Quist, Hartmut Meyer, Christian Vélot

“Topic 5: Jack Heinemann’s request of support in his judicial struggle with GenØk. David and Jack worked on a fact sheet of the case, it was sent to the board before the meeting. After a long discussion, the board came up with the following options:

—ENSSER should engage itself in this struggle, defending Jack against allegations that seem not to be correct

— ENSSER should not publicly engage due to the fact that GenØk is the only larger institution that pursues independent research and capacity building in the field of biosafety, it would be contraproductive for our common biosafety work if ENSSER and GenØk would find themselves in a public struggle

— ENSSER should write a letter to GenØk informing GenØk about the fact that Jack presented his case to the board and asked for support, underlining the important role that GenØk plays in the international biosafety field, stressing the importance that this work must not be challenged by internal struggles with employees that seem to be unnecessary, calling for second thoughts at GenØk and Jack about their further activities, which obviously will end before court, and to settle the conflict in a mutual understanding and with a withdrawal of (unjustified) legal actions.

— Hartmut will write a draft letter and circulate it within the board in the week of Oct 22.”

KEY PEOPLE

- Angelika Hilbeck, chairperson
- David Quist, treasurer, GenOK
- Nicolas Defarge, deputy chairperson
- Fern Wickson, treasurer – GenOk Centre for Biosafety
- Rosa Binimelis Adell, secretary
- Claudia Neubauer, non-executive member
- Diederick Sprangers, non-executive member
- Ricarda Steinbrecher, non-executive member
- András Székács, non-executive member
- Lucas Wirl, press information officer
- [Giles Eric Seralini](#), member (ENSSER website has over 150 pages of indexed content referencing Seralini)

Members

ENSSER Paid Memberships[\[2\]](#)

- Steffi Ober, veterinarian, Berlin, Germany DOB 12.06.64, no affiliationsMert
- Martha Mertens, PhD biology genetics, Munich, Germany, DOB 14.04.47, freelance biologists, member of Institute for Biodiversity Regensburg, Working Group on Genetic Engineering of BUND (German member of [Friends of the Earth](#)Europe),
- Antje Lorch, Masters in biology, Amsterdam, Netherlands, DOB 9.12.68, freelance consultant to anti-GMO NGOs, project manager GM Tree Watch and consultant to EcoNexus.[\[3\]](#), board member GeN (Gen-ethic Network, Berlin Germany), member stTestBioTech, member Ecoropa, editor of Biotechnology and Development Monitor
- Fred Jopp, Diploma Landscape Ecology, DOB 19.04.65, IGB Berlin Adjunct Professor, Member German Ecological Society, Member Ecological Society America
- David Gee, BA Politics & Economics, DOB 18.04.47, Senior Advisor European Environmental Agency
- Thomas Bohn, PhD Ecology, DOB 07.04.69, Section Leader [GenOk](#), Tromso, Norway
- Broder Breckling, Ecology, DOB 18.1.54, Germany
- Margarida Silva, PhD Biology, DOB 21.1.63, Portugal, Assistant Professor Portuguese Catholic University, coordinator [\[Transgenicos Fora\]](#) (organic and eco advocacy coalition: AGROBIO, Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica• CAMPO ABERTO, Associação de Defesa do Ambiente• CNA, Confederação Nacional da Agricultura • COLHER PARA SEMEAR, Rede Portuguesa de Variedades Tradicionais• FAPAS, Fundo para a Protecção dos Animais Selvagens• GAIA, Grupo de Acção e Intervenção Ambiental• GEOTA, Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e Ambiente• Associação IN LOCO• LPN, Liga para a Protecção da Natureza• MPI, Movimento Pró-Informação para a Cidadania e Ambiente• QUERCUS, Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza)
- Vincenzo Pavone, PhD Social & Political Science, DOB 1.09.75, Madrid Spain, (Membership supported by Gille Seralini & Brian Wynne), research fellow Institute of Public Policies, member of [Science and Democracy Network](#), member [PRIME network](#)
- Jill Scott, PhD Art& Design, DOB 01.01.52, Switzerland, Professor University of the Artz Zurich, co-director Artistsinlabs program.
- Gilles-Eri Seralini, PhD HDR molecular biology/ endocrinology, France, Professor University of Caen, President of CRIIGEN (Membershp supported by Christian Velot & Angelika Hillbeck both of CRIIGEN)
- Joel Spiroux de Vendomois, Doctorate de Medecine, France, DOB 09.03.52, (Membership supported by Gilles Eric Seralini and Chrstian Velot), member CRIIGEN, health and environment expert
- Diederick Sprangers, DrS Biochemistry, DOB 26.03.59, heads “one-man” [Stichting Genethica Genethics Foundation](#)
- Andras Szekacs, PhD DSc Phylotes Chemical Engineering, DOB 04.08.60, head of ecotoxicology Plant Protection Institute, founding member and chair GMO ROUNd Table.

- Beatrix Tappeser, PhD Biology, DOB 31.3.54, division head Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Germany), supervisory board GLS Gemeinschaftsbank, Federation of German Scientists
- [Christoph Then](#), DVM veterinarian
- Angela-Emma von Beestein, Psychotherapy, DOB 10.01.50, Ökologischer Ärztenbund e.V., affiliated with homeopath organization.
- Tom Wakeford, PhD Natural Sciences, DOB 24.12.70, PEALS Research Centre, International Institute for Environment and Development, Scientists for Global Responsibility (UK)
- Tom Boersen, PhD, Philosophy, DOB 27.9.70, Department of Education, Learning and Philosophy, Aalborg University Copenhagen, Council member, International Network of Engineers and Scientists for global responsibility, Treasurer, The Danish National Pugwash group
- Pierluigi Bozzi, PhD, Environmental Economics & Law, DOB 10.7.00,
- Susan Jobling, PhD Environmental Toxicology, DOB 23.09.67, research fellow Institute for the Environment, endocrine disruptor research
- Les Levidow, PhD, DOB 25.01.50, Open University, Editor Science as Culture, precautionary principle and regulatory policies
- Bernadette Oehen, Botany, DOB 07.07.61, project leader FiBL Zurich, co-existence, organic agriculture and GMOs
- Egil Robert Orskov, PhD DSc, Livestock Nutrition, 24.05.34, Macaulay Institute Aberdeen
- Thomas Potthast, PhD Philosophy, DOB 25.07.63, Tuebingen
- Gianni Tamino, natural sciences, DOB 27.01.47, retired professor University of Padova, ISDE
- Terje Traavik, Dr. Philosophy, DVM, DOB 05.12.43, GenOK
- Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, PhD Biology, 25.06.39, Ernst Institute for Sustainable Development
- Marie Pierre Baudin Maurin, PhD Law, DOB 29.09.67, lecturer University of Caen, CRIIGEN council,
- Christophe Bonneuil, PhD History Sociology of Science, DOB 15.02.68, CNRS, board member Fondation Citoyennes (CRIIGEN funder)
- Dominique Cellier, PhD Statistics, 09.06.48, Associate Professor of Statistics Litis Lab University of Rouen, member CRIIGEN, ATTAC, Amis de la Confédération Paysanne ([Jose Bove](#)) and Greenpeace
- Juliane Filser, Dipl. Biology/Ecology, 07.08.54, University of Bremen Ecology Department, vice director UFT
- Mercy Kamara, PhD Science & Technology Studies, 24.05.70, Assistant Professor Communications, Business and IT Roskilde University, science communication and stakeholder engagement, African biosafety
- Jan Koser, physical chemistry, DOB 18.1.68, UFT Bremen,
- Frederick Lemarchand, unk, DOB unk, Public Relations University of Caen
- Irina Maia, Master (equivalent) plant biology, DOB 10.9.80, coordinator GENET and INTERBIO (Portuguese organic farming association)
- Matthias Meier, DrSc Environmental Sciences, DOB 08.12.72, project leader FiBL – Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
- Jean Michel Panoff, PhD Biology, DOB 28.3.60, CRIIGEN, University of Caen, Complex Thought Association
- Armin Spok, Dr. MSc genetics technology policy, DOB 18.2.63, Austria
- Louis Vandelac, PhD Sociology, DOB 15.11.50, CRIIGEN Institute for Environmental Science

- Odd-Gunnar, PhD biology, DOB 7.15.72, assistant department leader GenOK
- Arnaud Apoteker, PhD Biology, DOB 2.15.56, GMO Campaigner at European Parliament, Founder Inf'OGM NGO, coauthor with Greenpeace on anti-GMO reports.
- Georgina Catacora-Vargas, MSc agroecology, DOB 7.17.76, exchange researcher GenOK, SOCLA (Scientific Latin American Society on Agroecology)
- Ignacio Chapela, PhD Microbial Ecology, DOB 12.9.59, Associate Professor Berkeley
- Paul Dorfman, PhD Environmental Science, DOB 9.4.56, Senior Research University of Warwick, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust Nuclear Policy Research Fellow, Founding Co-ordinator, Nuclear Consulting Group (NCG)
- Laura Maxim, PhD Ecology, DOB 14.08.78, researcher CNRS, chemical risk analysis
- Irina Rodriguez de la Flor, MA Fine Arts, DOB 27.07.75, Director [Health Defense Organization \(NGO\)](#), member ISIS, SANNAS, INTERCIP
- Andrew Waterson, PhD Health & Social Science, DOB 13.08.48, Occupational and Environmental Health Research Group, University of Stirling (Scotland)
- Jose Luis Yela, Doctor Zoology, DOB 24.3.56, associate professor University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain)
- Simon Birkett, unk, unk, [Clean Air in London](#) NGO
- Luigi D'Andrea, PhD natural sciences, DOB 28.10.78, proiec{ coordinator in the Swiss working group on genetic engineering ([www.oentechnoloie.ch](#); [www.stopogm.ch](#))
- Michael Dittmar, Dr., DOB 13.01.56, senior research scientists ETH Zurich, President of the conCERNed for humanity club (CERN)
- Mathias Otto, PhD Ecology, DOB 19.10.68, scientist Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
- Rlf Schulz, Dr. Biology, DOB 24.12.66, Institute for Environmental Sciences, University Koblenz-Landau (Germany)
- Fern Wickson, PhD Science & Technology, DOB 16.10.76, scientist GenOK, Ecopololitics Association of Australasia

FUNDING SOURCES

- [Charles Leopold Mayer Foundation](#)
- [Fondation Sciences Citoyennes](#)
- [Hatzfeldt Stiftung](#)
- [NABU](#)
- [Stiftung GEKKO](#)
- Third World Network

AFFILIATIONS

- [International Project on GMO Environmental Risk Assessment Methodologies](#): ENSSER chairwoman Angelika Hilbeck is a GMO ERA Project phase II steering committee member
- [Fondation Sciences Citoyennes](#)
- Non-executive member Claudia Neubauer is the director of the foundation

- [Genethics Foundation](#): non-executive member Diederick Sprangers is founder and director of the foundation
- [EcoNexus](#): non-executive member Ricarda Steinbrecher is co-director of the nonprofi
- GMO ERA

Resources

[ENSSER website](#)

References

1. [?](#) ENSSER Annual Report 2012.
2. [?](#) <http://www.ensser.org/fileadmin/files/>
3. [?](#) <http://ifrik.org/about>