



### BIOSAFENET\* Final Conference

## „How to strengthen the voice of biosafety research in the public debate on GM plants“

Including an Open Forum for stakeholders and journalists:  
“What does the public need for opinion making? Available information sources on biosafety results”

29 June 2009  
Julius Kühn-Institut, Berlin, Germany

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[www.gmo-safety.eu](http://www.gmo-safety.eu)

\* European Commission research project in the 6th Framework (2006-2009)

A briefing has been planned for the press with representatives from BIOSAFENET, ISBR and PRRI.

Information booths will represent ISBR as well as other research and communications initiatives such as bioSicherheit (a BMBF-sponsored communications platform of German biosafety projects) and the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB).

The conference concludes with a panel discussion of the topic “Biological safety research in the field of plant biotechnology: What are people’s expectations? How can people find out about current research findings?”.

The attending European biosafety initiatives seek dialogue with stakeholders and journalists about their information needs and about more direct pathways towards closer exchange of information and opinions between science and the public. Central attention should be focused towards the appropriate format and content of information offers.

Journalists are invited to the whole event.

To register, please complete and return attached form by fax.

Programme	Topics	Speakers
Monday, 29 June 2009		
10.30 – 13.00 International Conference	BIOSAFENET: Enhancing the role of European scientists globally – ISBGMO (biosafety symposia)	Joachim Schiemann, JKI, Germany
	BIOSAFENET: International network of local biosafety research representatives	Ervin Balázs, ARI, Hungary
	BIOSAFENET: BiosafeRes database	Wendy Craig, ICGEB, Italy
	BIOSAFENET: Expert seminars on biosafety issues	Mark Tepfer, ICGEB, Italy
	BIOSAFENET/bioSicherheit: Communication platform GMO-Safety	Kristina Sinemus, Genius, Germany
	PRRI: overview on activities	Zuzana Kulichova, PRRI, The Netherlands
	ISBR: overview on activities	Patrick Rudelsheim, Perseus, Belgium
13.00 – 14.00 Presentation of European communication projects on GMO safety research	Information booths of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIOSAFENET</li> <li>• International Society for Biosafety Research (ISBR)</li> <li>• Public Research &amp; Regulation Initiative (PRRI)</li> <li>• bioSicherheit (biological safety research in Germany)</li> <li>• International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)</li> </ul>	
14.00 – 15.00 Press Briefing (German/Englisch)	<u>Biological safety research – Mind the information gap:</u> BIOSAFENET scientists committed to providing the public with reliable information.	Representatives of BIOSAFENET and PRRI
15.00 – 17.00 Panel discussion (in German)	<u>Biological safety research in the field of plant biotechnology:</u> What are people’s expectations? How can people find out about current research findings?	All speakers, stakeholders, journalists

A main goal of **BIOSAFENET**, an EU-funded network of European scientists, is robust public information on the biosafety research conducted on genetically modified (GM) plants.

In the long-standing debate on the safety of transgenic crops, such research and its comprehensive, enlightening results often have been relegated to a subordinate role or ignored altogether. However, a scientific basis is needed for the socio-political decision-making frames and the responsible and sustainable application of such technology in agriculture and the food industry.

BIOSAFENET and other European initiatives contribute to the bundling of biosafety knowledge. The BIOSAFENET project was conceived as an important tool for objective policy consultation and as a comprehensive source of biosafety information for a broad section of the public.



At this conference, BIOSAFENET will present its latest achievements in strengthening a wide network of European biosafety researchers. An ultimate aim remains the promotion of dialogue among researchers, as well as between scientists and the public, through activities such as the following:

- Co-organisation of the International Symposia on the Biosafety of GMO (ISBGMO), which constitute the sole internationally-recognised forum on the topic
- Integration of scientists from the new EU Member States and fostering of biosafety research within Europe through scientific cooperation with European institutions and authorities such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- Provision of a data bank illuminating the goals, methods and results of international projects and thereby making biosafety research more transparent
- Active cooperation in the development and editing of GMO-Safety, a comprehensive information platform for political representatives, stakeholders and the general public. GMO-Safety, a project sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), offers multimedia material prepared by journalists on the goals and results of biosafety research.

<http://www.gmo-safety.eu>

At this closing conference, two further initiatives, i.e. the Public Research and Regulation Initiative (PRRI) and the International Society for Biosafety Research, will present their activities.



**PRRI:** In 2004, PRRI was established to offer a forum to public researchers involved in modern biotechnology, who consequently become involved in relevant international discussions such as the Meetings of the Parties to the CPB (MOPs). Participation in such meetings is aimed towards informing negotiators about the objectives and progress of public research in modern biotechnology and towards representing science directly in negotiations.

<http://www.pubresreg.org/>

## ISBR

**ISBR:** By improving communication among scientists, the International Society for Biosafety Research (ISBR) promotes such research and its scientific soundness. By fostering communication and technical exchange among experts, the ISBR supports the science used in biosafety assessment processes and facilitates constructive dialogue on important science-based biosafety.

<http://www.isbr.info/>

