

no patents on seeds

Opposition to Monsanto bio-piracy patent on soybeans rejected

‘No Patents on Seeds!’ plan to appeal

11 October 2017 / The European Patent Office (EPO) has today rejected the opposition filed by ‘No Patents on Seeds!’ against the Monsanto patent EP 2134870. The patent held by Monsanto covers the use of hundreds of gene sequences that occur in natural soybean varieties and other similar species; they are to be used in conventional breeding. ‘No Patents on Seeds!’ will now file an appeal as, according to European patent laws, patents on conventional breeding cannot be granted.

“Currently, we do not have sufficient legal certainty in this area and the EPO can in future continue to grant patents on the conventional breeding of plants and animals,” says Christoph Then, who was at the hearing in The Hague. “We are demanding that the loopholes in legislation are closed to prevent large companies from being the only ones able to breed plants and animals.”

The EPO stated that their reason for rejecting the opposition was that although patents cannot be granted on the conventional breeding of plants and animals, they can be granted on the selection of plants and animals for breeding. However, ‘No Patents on Seeds!’ points to the fact that the selection of plants and animals for breeding is inextricably linked to breeding. Therefore, the EPO interpretation of current legislation is unacceptable.

[More info about the patent EP 2134870](#)

Contacts:

Carla Hoinkes, Public Eye, +41 76 480 54 85, carla.hoinkes@publiceye.ch

Judith Reusser, SWISSAID, +41 78 700 49 61, j.reusser@swissaid.ch

At the hearing:

Christoph Then, No Patents on Seeds! + 49 151 54 63 80 40, info@no-patents-on-seeds.org

Further information: www.no-patents-on-seeds.org