



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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AGRILEG 147**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat
to: Delegations

Subject: Genetically modified organisms : decision-making process
- Note from the Luxembourg delegation

Delegations will find attached a note from Luxembourg on the above topic, which will be discussed under "Other business" at the meeting of the Environment Council on 17 October 2005.

Genetically modified organisms : decision-making process
Note from the Luxembourg delegation

In its proceedings on 24 June 2005 on the subject of GMOs the Environment Council rejected by a qualified majority eight Commission proposals seeking to lift the safeguard measures taken by five Member States against a number of transgenic maize varieties authorised in the European Union. The Council was unable to reach a qualified majority either for or against the Commission proposal on the genetically modified maize MON 863. At the Press Conference, the Commissioner for the Environment referred to the legal framework in which the Commission operated and spoke of a "political signal that the Member States may want to revisit some aspects of the existing system".

Criticism of the current decision-making process is an undeniable factor in continuing public mistrust, if not hostility, to GMOs and part of the reason why the great majority of Member States continue to take a very cautious approach.

This being so, it would be advisable for us to review together how to improve the terms and conditions of the decision-making process in order to improve its credibility and acceptability.

An in-depth discussion at the meeting of the Environment Council on 2 December 2005 would provide the opportunity for such a review to get under way.