NO PATENTS ON SEEDS!

Conference call NPOS, 24 November 2020

Minutes

Participants

1. Erling Frederiksen / Danish Seed Savers
2. Martha Mertens / FOE Germany (BUND, BN)
3. Katherine Dolan / ARCHE NOAH
4. François Meienberg / ProSpecieRara
5. Ruth Tippe / No patents on life
6. Anne-Charlotte Moy / No patents on seeds!
7. Christoph Then / No patents on seeds!
8. Johanna Eckhardt / No patents on seeds!

excused

- Matthias Juhas, Gen-ethical network
- Bram de Jonge / Oxfam

Chair: Christoph
Minutes: Johanna

Agenda

- Matthias Juhas replaces Gudula Madsen as representative for the Gen-ethical network.

1. Updates

1.1. Updates from the countries / organisations

- **DE/ Christoph**: Call with the ministry tomorrow.
- **DK/Erling**: Erling is in contact with a member of the parliament who will address questions to the Minister. We had a meeting with 3 experts of the Danish Patent Office.
- **CH/François**: They wanted to meet with us after the meeting of the Committee on Patent Law. François will follow up on that.
- **AT/Katherine**: We stay in touch with the Austrian Patent Office. We will prepare proposals to change the Austrian patent law. We had our first workshop on patents for organisations in Benelux. Participants were seed savers, Aseed, participants with agricultural and academic background. We have the second workshop this Friday talking about campaigning possibilities.
- **Martha**: The Greens had their conference last weekend. There was a heavy discussion on genetic engineering. They had a stronger wording in their programme than in the past in regards to patents. It is good to now have a written statement on patents from them.
- **FR/Christoph**: FR was against our position in the Admin. Council. So an exchange with them would be very interesting for us. We will try to arrange a meeting with the support of Anne-Charlotte. We don't want to criticise the French organisations. But there is more science now that shows differences between New genetic engineering and random mutagenesis. So they might be more open to our arguments. But in general we just want to talk to the experts and explain the contradictions in the EPO documents.

1.2. Update on NPOS meetings with representatives of EPO's Administrative Council

- **Johanna**: We met with the Patent Office of San Marino. The expert wasn't well informed, but very keen to hear our arguments. He supports our position and is open to find other delegations in the Admin. Council to work together. He'll closely coordinate with Italy.
- We had a meeting with the Patent Office, the Ministry of Agriculture and Justice from Norway. It was a good exchange, they wanted to gather information in preparation for the Committee on Patent Law. They didn't have a clear position yet.
- We met with the patent office of Portugal together with Plataforma Transgénicos Fora. 4 experts participated. They listened to our arguments, but didn't comment on their position. They have to coordinate with the Ministry of Justice / Agriculture first to come up with an official position.
- This and next week we'll follow up with the countries we didn't hear back from yet and send letters to all the countries we haven't contacted yet.

1.3. Update on Committee on Patent Law

- Katherine sent an update about the Committee on Patent Law
- Our meeting with the Patent Office at the beginning of December unfortunately got postponed to January/February.
- We still might get info in regards to the Admin. Council meeting on 15/16 December via our meetings with the countries.

2. Next steps

2.1. Public activity with 'screaming vegetables'?

- The masks are produced in Hamburg and should be ready on time.
- We agreed to make a photo with the 'screaming vegetables' and 2 shields (EN/DE) with a neutral message and our logos in front of the EPO in Munich.
- Martha will ask two volunteers from BN to come to the photo shooting.
- We'll have to ask for a permission for our activity in front of the EPO from the authorities/the EPO.
- We'll prepare a press release asking for a moratorium. We don't think we'll get the moratorium, but it will hopefully get things moving at the EPO. We aim for the press release to be published on Thursday, 10 December so that it gets to the representatives of the Admin Council in time before the meeting on 15/16 December. We'll send a draft to the group.

2.2. Contact to other countries

2.3. Further steps

- **Christoph**: Melon: Usually the written decision is published rather soon when a hearing is cancelled. It might be published before the AC meeting. We'll send out a press release on that occasion, too.
- Christoph might already start this year to have a look on the patent research.

3. Other

3.1. Next conference call

- Next conference call will be mid-January.