NO PATENTS ON SEEDS!

5 September 2022 - Conference call NPOS

Minutes

Participants

1. Erling Frederiksen / Danish Seed Savers
2. Dagmar Urban / ARCHE NOAH
3. François Meienberg / ProSpecieRara
4. Ruth Tippe / No patents on life
5. Anne-Charlotte Moy / No patents on seeds!
6. Christoph Then / No patents on seeds!
7. Johanna Eckhardt / No patents on seeds!

Participants German conference call 8 September 2022

1. Annemarie Volling / AbL
2. Georg Janßen / IG Nachbau
3. Verena Schmitt / Umweltinstitut München
4. Judith Düesberg / Gen-ethisches Netzwerk
5. Ruth Tippe / No patents on life
6. Christoph Then / No patents on seeds!
7. Johanna Eckhardt / No patents on seeds!

Chair: Christoph
Minutes: Johanna

Agenda

1. Updates

1.1. letters to ministries / Johanna

- We sent out letters to all ministries at the end of July.
- We'll have a meeting with the NL Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy on 19 September (online).
- A few ministries got back to us saying that they follow the issue, but don't see a need to get active or to have a meeting with NPOS.
- For a few countries we were advised by partner organisations to contact them after the summer.
- We will now send out a friendly reminder to all ministries.
- If we then don't get satisfying answers, we will get more confrontational with our approach.

1.2. DK/Erling

- Erling was able to be in personal contact with the minister for farming and food. But now the minister is involved in a scandal and has no influence at the moment. We'll try to get a meeting with the DK patent office, but we need political support.
- In theory, it is the minister of legal affairs who is responsible for patents, but in practice it is the minister of food.
- Erling will try to get an article out about patents.

1.3. AT / Dagmar

- We are still working on the national patent law, we sent our demands, we are now trying to convince the conservatives. We have meetings with the seed industry, the economic chamber, pharma industry, the agricultural minister in September.
- We are asking for the general NPOS demands, have a definition of ess. biological, exclude gene variations from patentability, scope of patents.
- The national law has to be ready until the end of the year.
- We will still work on a letter to the breeders.

1.4. DE/Christoph

- We'll follow up on our letter to the DE ministry.
- German government will have patents on the agenda at one of their upcoming meetings.

1.5. Umweltinstitut / Verena (from German call)

- Just like WeMove, Umweltinstitut started an activity where people were able to order beer coasters. They did get a lot of orders, it went very well.

2. Next steps and further strategy

- Christoph: We will most probably not reach the goal of the conference. Some experts support us and say that the situation is frightening. We will need more time, probably 3 years. We could hire a campaigner who could do a tour and visit around 5 countries each year. She/he could drive the bus, hand over the petition, organise a public event, reach out to media, cooperate with national organisations, etc.
- Dagmar: This is very similar to what WeMove had planned. Coordinate with them. Would be better to work with a national campaigner in each country. To have the same goal / demands for the next 3 years is too long. I would have to check.
- Christoph and Dagmar can both propose an experienced campaigner.

2.1. More confrontational approach towards governments

- Send another round of letters at the beginning of September
- Wait for feedback until the end of September
- Public activities in October/November in front of ministries
- Workshop with experts at the beginning of October
    - prepare report?

- The timeframe to organise a workshop in October will be too short. Plus, we should offer some new information, f.e. KWS patent, tomato patent, Austrian national law if it works out well,... We could plan for the workshop in November.
- Dagmar: We could as well plan for a workshop for experts/technical content and one for the political level to explain our letter. The content is often too technical and they don't take us seriously.
- [P.S.: Additionally, together with a German MEP we will organise a workshop for EU MEPs on 16 November 17h-19h CET, online. Translation will be provided in EN/FR/DE.]

2.2. Reach out to companies

- KWS is interacting a lot with the public

- from German conference call:
- Georg/Judith: KWS holds it's shareholder meeting on 6 December. GeN and AbL have been present in the past. There are not many other organisations present, so it is a good platform to get our message across. AbL/GeN could ask questions at the shareholder meeting and could prepare flyers with basic infos.
- It could raise attention amongst journalists, the German economic press is there. We could organise a press talk before the event.
- KWS is usually open for a dialogue.
- We should rather focus on patents on conventional breeding and not so much on new GM-patents by KWS.
- We could combine that with filing the opposition (deadline 15 March 2023)
- Christoph: We could probably order a maize sculpture (screaming vegetable) for the public event.

2.3. Public outreach

- label seed packages (ARCHE NOAH, Bionext, Bingenheimer, Dreschflegel,...) – we would directly get in touch with the people who work with seeds

- Dagmar: If we would put stickers on our packages, we would not reach a new target group. Most people who buy our seeds already know about the petition.
- Christoph: But via Bingenheimer, Dreschflegel, etc. we would reach new people.
- Dagmar: The production of packages is planned a long time in advance. We should rather use stickers. Maybe a QR code that leads to a petition. This way we would as well know how many people we reached via the stickers.
- The sticker would not be a label saying "We don't use patented seeds" but rather a sticker that raises awareness.

- petition

- Switzerland and Austria want to hand over the petition until the end of the year to close the petition. Austria would only hand it over if there is as well a hand over in other 3 countries. The hand-over doesn't have to be the exact same date, but within 2 weeks.
- But things will probably not move because of the petition, it will probably not have a lot of impact.

2.4. Other

- work on our argumentation line
- further allies (farmer organisations, breeders,...)
- national laws
- Webinar CPOV / Judith (German conference call)

- The recording can be watched via registering here: https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8202678226236479503. There will be further webinars on intellectual property rights and biotechnology/plants (See as well Judiths emails from 9 September.)
- They clearly stated that random mutagenesis is technical and patentable.

3. Patents

3.1. beer patent

- We received the decision in writing. We now have to file a complaint.

3.2. KWS patent

- deadline for opposition: 15 March 2023

4. Other

4.1. Application Salvia (grant period 2023-2025)

- draft sent via Proton by Johanna on 18 July 2022
- members will get a short version of the application, board will agree on the application.
- For the NPOS strategy, the NPOS discussions (f.e. at the meeting of members) will be more relevant. The Salvia project can be adapted accordingly if needed.

4.2. Planning and budget 2023

- we will need the same amount of support from the organisations. Keep that in mind in your budget.
- PSR will probably reduce the amount; they work rather on other topics.

4.3. Meeting of members 2023 – date?

- probably in March – We will fix it at the end of the year

4.4. coordination of German/English conference calls (possible translation)

- from German conference call:
- translations usually don't work very well/help a lot – even if it is a professional translator.
- Proposal: Always have the German call first. German speaking participants will then already be familiar with the topics discussed. They can then more easily as well follow the English conference call. If possible, they will participate in the English call so that we can have a discussion in the whole group. If occasionally a translation into German is possible, we can repeat what has been said in German (which might be helpful for other participants, too).
- Dagmar: "For one of the next calls I would also like to discuss again the possibility of having translation in our calls so we do not have to do two and have situations like this regularly."

4.5. Next conference call

- Christoph on vacation from 3-20 October
- Next call end of October