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**Subject: EFB position on Seralini et al. (2012) publication on reported toxicity of Roundup-tolerant genetically modified maize.**

The European Food Safety Authority has just released a review of the paper by Seralini et al. published by Food and Chemical Toxicology. EFSA highlights the multiple limitations of the study, both in the experimental design and in transparently reporting the data. EFSA critiques are largely consistent with the observations of a wide number of scientists who reviewed the paper findings, soon after its publication.

The European Federation of Biotechnology would like to stress two additional aspects of this event.

The first one is the peculiar way the authors handled the communication about the study and its dissemination: a very unusual strategy for researchers, more focused to its impact on the media than to the science behind their findings.

It is reported by several journalists that early access to the paper before publication was only allowed upon signature of a very peculiar non disclosure agreement: such an agreement would have prevented the journalists from approaching third-party researchers for comment.

Additionally, a dedicated website opened at the same time of the release of the paper, with dedicated dissemination material, and ready-to-use messages. The paper also anticipates the release of a book, mostly based on those findings.

The second aspect is the peer-review process this paper was subject to. The Federation cannot explain how the reviewers chosen by the Journal did not address the same major observations highlighted by the EFSA and the scientific community at large. Nor our community can explain how Food and Chemical Toxicology allows the publication of images and graphics with emotional rather than scientific relevance. This paper represents a dangerous case of failure of the peer-review system, which threatens the credibility not just of the Journal but of the Scientific method overall.

Actions like Seralini's, contributed to heating the debate around GMOs in Agriculture with emotional values. Scientific Journals and Scientists should play a key independent role in this scenario: when they are subject to other agendas, they renounce to their function in Society.

For these reasons the European Federation of Biotechnology invites the authors to retract their paper and provide a transparent list of their funding sources, and urges the Scientific Community to improve the quality of the peer-review process in order to avoid in the future similar results, that only create unjustified panic and do not serve Society.

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