

## **STATEMENT**

### **CropLife International Expresses Concern over the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Resolution on GMOs**

**Brussels, 23 November 2004** -- The plant science industry is concerned by the resolution adopted by The World Conservation Union (IUCN) on 22 November 2004, which calls for an international moratorium on further releases of GMOs until human and animal health and biodiversity is proven without reasonable doubt to be safe. Although not binding to governments, the recommendation for a blanket moratorium is scientifically unfounded, and runs counter to an approach based on a case-by-case and science-based assessment of agricultural technologies. A case-by-case and science-based safety assessment better ensures that the proven benefits of biotechnology can be realized, while minimizing any risks.

Human and animal health and environmental safety are of utmost importance to the plant science industry. Before any GMOs are released into the environment, they are extensively tested for any potential impact on health or environment. All products must meet strict regulatory controls before being released for field testing or, further down the line, for commercial use. The testing approach and regulatory requirements are continuously updated on the basis of intensive biosafety research taking place all around the world.

GMOs have been grown and consumed on a large scale for almost a decade. More than 3000 peer-reviewed research papers describing the results of biosafety research for GMOs have been published. They confirm that genetically modified crops are at least as safe as their conventional counterparts.

Agricultural biotechnology is already delivering substantial benefits in both the developing and developed world. These benefits have been widely distributed among farmers, consumers and industry - and include increases in yield, improved incomes, reduced labour, and, in some cases, reduced environmental impacts. International organizations and bodies such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Council for Science, as well as a number of national food safety authorities and medical associations, have all positively commented on the safety and/or benefits of agricultural biotechnology.

The plant science industry supports the appropriate implementation of international treaties, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. If properly implemented according to sound science and risk assessment principles, these treaties will encourage innovation, development and capacity-building for agricultural technologies that are necessary for sustainable agriculture and achieving the goals of biodiversity protection.

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#### **Note to Editors:**

CropLife International is the global federation representing the plant science industry. It supports a network of regional and national associations in 88 countries, and is led by companies such as BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont, FMC, Monsanto, Sumitomo and Syngenta. CropLife International promotes the benefits of crop protection and biotechnology products, their importance to sustainable agriculture and food production, and their responsible use through stewardship activities.

#### **For further information and interviews, please contact:**

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