

BURNING ICE #7 CONFERENCE

THE PROMISED LAND OF TRANSGENIC CROPS
THURSDAY 27/3 11:00 – 22:00 KAAITHEATER BRUSSELS

ORG.: CLEA (Centrum Leo Apostel), VUB (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) & KAAITHEATER

The theme of the seventh Burning Ice Festival is the genetic technology approach to world food issues and the agro-ecological alternative that centres on resilience and biodiversity. The festival opens with a scientific conference that questions the conceptual, ecological, toxicological and agricultural promises of GMO's.

Forty years ago, in 1974, gen technology took centre stage in scientific research. With unprecedented possibilities came also unprecedented responsibilities. There was a broad consensus amongst the scientists of the day concerning the applicability of the precautionary principle to their projects and practices. Now, forty years later, in a dramatically changed academic and societal environment, this precautionary principle seems further away than ever before. Research focuses largely on exploiting findings for commercialisation. Research indicating that there might be serious concerns with respect to containment, effectiveness and medical risks of GMO-organisms is systematically downplayed or even discredited. The on-going ecological degradation of our planet and the growth of the world's population has opened an entirely new market for a 'food and fuel technology', based on genetic engineering, and sold to both the public and politicians as the panacea for the world's destabilised agro-economy and agro-ecology. This conference brings together specialists from different disciplines who, through their scientific research, question that 'promised land of transgenic crops'.

LECTURES IN ENGLISH (transl. FR) & FRENCH (transl. EN)

FREE but please book at tickets@kaaitheater.be

11:00

CHRISTOPHE BONNEUIL // Respondent: Gaëtan Vanloqueren

The Gene as an icon: a cultural, environmental and political history of the industrialization of lifeenvironment

Christophe Bonneuil is a science and technology historian and sociologist. He is head of research at the CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) and a member of the Centre Alexandre-Koyré.



Gaëtan Vanloqueren, agro-economist by training, is a Research Associate at the University of Louvain (UCL). He was for the past four years senior adviser to the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the right to food and coordinated his support team.

14:00

IGNACIO CHAPELA // Respondent: Isabelle Goldringer

From transgenesis to horizontal gene transfer: the movement of DNA down the Gene Stream in the environment

Ignacio Chapela is a microbial ecologist and mycologist at the University of California, Berkeley. He is best known for his 2001 paper in Nature on the flow of transgenes into wild maize populations and as an outspoken critic of the University of California's ties to the biotechnology industry.



Isabelle Goldringer is Research Director at INRA (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, France) and she is the leader of the team 'Diversity, Evolution and Adaptation of Populations' (DEAP), mainly studying the management of wheat genetic diversity.

16:00

GILLES-ERIC SÉRALINI // Respondent: Jacques Van Helden

Chemical pollutants and GMOs in food: effects on health and detoxification

Gilles-Éric Séralini is a professor of molecular biology at the University of Caen. He is best known for publishing research concluding that genetically modified food is unsafe for consumption; one such study, published in September 2012 in Food and Chemical Toxicology prompted many headlines about the dangers of Roundup Ready corn and the Roundup herbicide.



Jacques Van Helden is an agronomic engineer. Since 2011 he is professor at Aix-Marseille Université, Technological Advances for Genomics and Clinics (TAGC, INSERM Unit U1090). From 2007 until 2011 he was Director of the Laboratoire de Bioinformatique des Génomes et des Réseaux (BiGRé), Université Libre de Bruxelles.

18:00

OPENING BURNING ICE EXPO

- Center for Postnatural History (US) [Selected Artifacts](#)
- Heath Bunting (GB) [Super Weed kit 1.0.](#)
- Future Farmers/Amy Franceschini (US) [Flatbread Society](#)
- Asa Sonjasdotter (SV) [The Order of Potatoes](#)

20:00

MARTA G. RIVERA-FERRE // Respondent: Marjolein Visser

Are GMOs the solution for the world food problem?
Which alternatives for research?

Marta G. Rivera-Ferre is associate professor at the university of Vic, Department of Food and Environment and a researcher at the Centre of Research in Agrifood Economy and Development (Barcelona-Spain).



Marjolein Visser graduated in Agricultural sciences and Applied Biological Sciences. She holds a full time lectureship in Farming Systems and Agroecology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles since 2006.

21:30

CLOSING PANEL DISCUSSION

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scientific committee: Karin Verelst, Anneleen Kenis, Ali Bektas, Barbara Van Dyck