

GE Trees

Author: Lucy

Sharratt<info@cban.ca><p>CBAN is a founding member and Steering Committee Member of the North American STOPGE Trees Campaign and is working with groups across the world for a global ban on GE trees.</p><p>May 2011: With shaken confidence over the commercial future of the technology, the genetically engineered (GE) tree company ArborGen, a joint project of timber corporations International Paper, MeadWestvaco and Rubicon, decided suddenly to change its plans and not sell shares in ArborGen publicly on the NASDAQ exchange.</p><h2>Groups Sue U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Over GM Tree Field Tests Approval</h2><p>July 1, 2010: An alliance of conservation organizations issuing the U.S. Department of Agriculture over its approval of open-air field tests of genetically engineered (GE) hybrid eucalyptus tree across the southern United States. The permit, issued to a company called ArborGen, which is a joint initiative of International Paper, MeadWestvaco and Rubicon, was approved May 12 with minimal environmental review. It authorizes the experimental planting and flowering of a new, genetically engineered hybrid on 28 secret sites across seven southern states? Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas.</p><p>ArborGen hopes GE? cold-

tolerant? *Eucalyptus* will become widely planted for pulp and biomass. But eucalyptus trees are not native to the United States and are known to become invasive, displacing native wildlife and plants in various areas around the country and increasing wild fire risk.Click here for more information on the case.</p><p>U.S. government approval of GE eucalyptus trees sets a dangerous precedent to allow other experimental GE forest trees, including poplar and pine, that would inevitably and irreversibly contaminate native trees with destructive GE traits, devastating forest ecosystems and wildlife. Once GE trees escape, there is no way to call them back. The only way to stop genetic contamination of native forests is to ban the commercial release of GE trees before it is too late.</p><div class="object-right"><div class="content-view-embedded-media"><div class="class-image"><div class="attribute-image"><p></p></div></div></div></div><h2>Take Action</h2><p>Groups sign on to the demand to ban GE trees in Canada:Click here to sign on</p><p>47 groups signed the letter to the Government of Canada with the following demands:
Click here to see the full letter
Click here to just view the list of 47 groups.</p><p>For the health and future of Canada? s forest ecosystems and those around the world:</p><p>1. We, the undersigned, ask for an end to existing field trials in Canada and an end to approvals for field trials of genetically engineered trees in Canada.</p><p>2. We ask for an end to the use of public funds for field-testing and an end to field-testing at government research stations.</p><p>3. We call upon the Canadian Government to support a global moratorium on field testing, planting and commercial use of genetically engineered trees because of the serious risks they pose to biological diversity and to forest ecosystems in Canada and across the world.Sign on here.</p><h2>Background</h2><p>Field Trials in Canada:
In Canada, there have been only one or two field trials in any given year since 1997.
o Since 2000, open-air field tests have only been carried out by government researchers at the Canadian Forest Service, not by private companies.
o Currently (2011) there is testing on genetically engineered poplar at the Laurentian Forestry Centre in Quebec and at Queen's University, Ontario.</p>Genetically Engineered Trees: Basic BackgroundGE Trees, Cellulosic Biofuels & Destruction of Forest Biological Div

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ersityFeb2008(pdf10pages)<p>?GEEtreeshavethepotentialtowreakecologicalhavocthroughouttheworld?snativeforests.GEEtreescouldalsoimpactwildlifeaswellasruralandindigenouscommunitiesthatdependonintactforestsfortheirfood,shelter,water,livelihoodandculturalpractices.Asageneticist,Ibelievetherearetoomanyunknownandunansweredquestionstobegrowinggeneticallyengineeredplants?foodcropsortrees?inopenfields.GEEtreesshouldnotbereleasedintotheenvironmentincommercialplantationsandanyoutdoortestplotsorexistingplantationsshouldberemoved."--

Dr.DavidSuzuki</p><p>ProvincialOpposition:
InAlberta:TheAlbertaForestGeneticResources Council?doesnotrecommendtheuseofGMOsforreforestationatthistime?
InBritishColumbia:TheMinistryofForestsandRange?hasensuredthatnogeneticallymodifiedtreeeedhasbeenregisteredorused?oncrownland.</p><p>?GEEtreeshavethepotentialtowreakecologicalhavocthroughouttheworld?snativeforests.GEEtreescouldalsoimpactwildlifeaswellasruralandindigenouscommunitiesthatdependonintactforestsfortheirfood,shelter,water,livelihoodandculturalpractices.Asageneticist,Ibelievetherearetoomanyunknownandunansweredquestionstobegrowinggeneticallyengineeredplants?foodcropsortrees?inopenfields.GEEtreesshouldnotbereleasedintotheenvironmentincommercialplantationsandanyoutdoortestplotsorexistingplantationsshouldberemoved."--

Dr.DavidSuzuki</p><p>TheCanadianForestServiceisconductingfieldtrialsofGEPoplarinQuebec?trialsthatmayalreadyposecontaminationthreatstoCanadianforests.Evenwithoutthesetrials,thefieldtrial currentlyunderwayintheUnitedStatescouldposeasignificantthreattoCanadianforesteecosystems.Thisisone reasonwhyCBANcollaboratescloselywithourcolleaguesintheUS.</p><p>GEEtreesposeagreat erthreatofcontaminationthanseenwithGECrops,largelybecause treeslivefordecades,hasomanyne arbywildrelativesandtheirpollen travelshundredsof miles.ThescenarioofcontaminationfromtreesgeneticallyengineeredtobeinsectresistanceviaBt(asinrecentgovernmentfieldtrialsinQuebec),forexample, warnsofseriousbiodiversityimpactsasBttargetslepidoptera,amainfoodsourceformanybirds.</p><p>NaturalResourcesCanadaisdiscussingtheuseof?Terminator technology(geneticallyengineeredsterileseedtechnology)tocontain geneticpollutionfromGEEtrees.Thisraisesanewlevelofconcerns sinceTerminatorwouldnotfunction100%butwould create newrisksfromthespreadofTerminatorgenesandsterilitytraits,forexample.</p><h2>OtherNews</h2><p>May4,2010,PressReleaseNewStudiesExposePotentialRisksofGMOTrees</p><p>April5,2010:Gone withtheWind:Far-

flungPinePollenStillPotentMilesfromtheTree</p><p>ClaireWilliamsoftheNationalEvolutionarySynthesisCenter(NESCent)intheU.S.andhercolleagueshavefoundthatpollenfromtheloblollypinecanstillgerminateafterdriftinglongdistances.Williamsandhercolleaguesusedahand-

helddevicecalledasporesampler tocaptureandanalyze pollenfoundoffthesoutheasterncoastoftheU.S.Samplingbyhelicopterandbyferry,theyfoundviablepinepollenasfaras2,000feetintheairand25miles offshore.Untilthen,thehighestpinepollenhad everbeenfoundintheatmosphere was1000feet,"commentsWilliams.ThesearchfindingshavebeenpublishedintheAmericanJournalofBotany.</p><p>GMloblollypinehasnotbeenapprovedforcommercialplanting.GMvarietiesareplantedintheU.S.infieldtrials,however.ThesearcherssayheirfindingmeansthatitwouldbedifficulttocontainthepollenfromGMloblollypinetrees.ThelonglifespanofpinetreesmakesitdifficulttoevaluatetheenvironmentalimpactsofGMvarieties,addsWilliams.ThesearchwasfundedbytheU.S.DepartmentofAgriculture(USDA).</p><h2>ReportfromtheUNMeetingMay2008</h2><p>GovernmentsattheUNmeetinginMay2008failedtobanGEEtreesYoucanreadtheCBANDailyBlogfromtheUNmeetinginGermanytofindoutwhat exactlyhappenedReadthePressReleasefromMay22:CanadaTries toEliminateMoratoriumRequestonGEE Trees</p><p>TheUnitedNationsConventiononBiologicalDiversitycouldhaveestablishedaninternationalmoratoriumonthefieldtestingandcommercialreleaseofGEEtreesatthelastCOP9meetingMay

19-

30inGermany.ButCanada,Brazil,andColombia,withAustraliaandNewZealandworkedagainstthisproposal fromAfrican countries.</p><p>CBANjoinedwithinternationalpartnerstopresentthepotentialnegative impacts ofGEEtrees.</p><a href="/Resources/Topics/GE-Trees/Potential-Impacts-of-Genetically-Engineered-

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Trees"target="_self">ClickheretoreadtheCBANbriefingtotheUnitedNationsmeeting.(6pages)>ThisbriefingisacritiqueofthebackgrounddocumentpreparedbytheSecretariatoftheConventiononBiologicalDiversity.(17pages)CBANhasalsosignedtheinternationalopenletterdemandingabanongeneticallyengineered(GE)trees.<p>CBANisaSteeringCommitteeMemberoftheNorthAmericanStopGETreesCampaignandis workingwithcolleaguesacrosstheworldinthecallforabanonGETrees.</p><p><h2>Articles</h2>Frankenforests:GETreesThreatenEcosystemCollapse,DaraColwell,AlterNet,August2,2007.<p><h2>Links</h2>STOPGETreesCampaignNorthAmericaWorldRainforestMovementGlobalForestCoalitionEcoNexus