IS CONCILIATION POSSIBLE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN FARMING AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: HERBICIDE TOLERANT CROPS IN THE GREAT BRITAIN EXPERIENCE

Summary

Public discussions as well official conferences with participation of representatives of the Polish Parliament and Senate, ministries, industry, farmers, local governments, pro-ecological NGOs and scientists revealed a deep and emotional division in opinions on approving growing GM crops in Poland. Both supporters as well critics expressed needs for objective evaluation of collected scientific data on the effect of GM crops on non-target organisms, preferably from research projects carried out in our region. During recent international meetings (e.g. IOBC, EFSA) the methodology, data collection and interpretation of result of the three year DEFRA — funded study on the environmental impact of GM herbicide — tolerant GMHT) crops, published by the Royal Society in October 2003, were cited as the model. In this review, selected data are presented to show that the type of a crop and field management has much greater influence than growing GMHT or conventional cultivars of maize, beet and spring rape on various groups of wildlife The British media and NGOs responses are cited as a strong impact on the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs — DEFRA, decision to give higher priorities to sustainability of arable weeds than to farmer's gains. Further experiments carried our by scientists on the Broom's Barn experimental station demonstrated that managing period of herbicide treatment and a row or overall application may lead to wildlife conservation, especially various species of birds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author wish to thank dr Alan Dewar for sharing relevant documents and his original research data on GMHT crops.