



Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Management

INVITATION

**Screening of the documentary film "BITTER SEEDS" by Director Micha X. Peled
Followed by Q&A with Dr. Angelika Hilbeck**

Dear Friends,

On 1 October 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development set forward a plan to meet 30% of farmers' seed requirements with genetically modified (GM) seeds and convert 50% of Vietnam's arable lands to GM crops. These ambitious targets foretell the rapid expansion of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in Vietnam. The companies that develop and sell GMO seeds promote their product by promising high yields, reduced pesticide use, and increased crop resilience to environmental stressors. Many consumers, scientists, and officials, however, are concerned about the relative lack of testing, unknown health impacts, risk of environmental contamination, food sovereignty, trade implications, and chronic farmer debt connected to GMOs.

The GE sub-group of the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Working Group (SANRM WG), a sectoral group within the auspices of the VUFO-NGO Resource Centre, is pleased to announce a screening of the documentary film "BITTER SEEDS" by American filmmaker and director Micha X. Peled, followed by a brief statement and Q&A with Dr. Angelika Hilbeck. This event will offer a unique opportunity to learn more about GMOs as well as have substantive discussion with one of the world's foremost GMO experts. We cordially invite you to this film screening and Q&A on:

Date and time: Saturday, 30 November 2013

Doors open at 9:45am, Screening begins promptly at 10:00am

Screening 10:00-11:20am, Q&A with Dr. Hilbeck 11:20-12:00pm

Followed by refreshments and discussion in the Ciné Café Courtyard

Venue: Cinémathèque, 22A Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi

Dr. Angelika Hilbeck is a senior scientist at the Institute of Integrative Biology within the Federal Institute of Technology, ETH Zurich (Switzerland). For nearly 20 years, Dr. Hilbeck's research has focused on biosafety issues of GMOs and the development of concepts for environmental risk assessment and post-release monitoring of GMOs. Her research and conceptual work also contributes to the implementation and shaping of EU Directives regulating the biosafety assessment of GMOs for field and commercial releases, the (UNEP CBD) Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and capacity building in developing countries. As such, she has also participated in "The GMO Guidelines" Project, which included Vietnam.

"BITTER SEEDS" is a 2011 documentary film that explores the relationship between escalating rates of suicide among Indian farmers and the crippling cycle of debt, crop failure and dispossession brought about by the introduction of genetically modified cotton seeds. Dr. Hilbeck served as an advisor to the film and will offer a brief statement and Q&A session following the screening of the film.

We believe that this event serves as an opportunity for valuable discussion and awareness building about an issue that is becoming increasingly important within Vietnam. On behalf of the SANRM WG and its GE sub-group you are cordially invited, and we hope to see you on 30 November!



Eduardo A. Sabio, Ph.D.

Chair, SANRM-WG

Regional Representative, VECO

Hanoi, 22 November 2013

PS. May we kindly ask you to register your participation at the latest by Thursday, 28 November 2013, with Ms Elizabeth Bailes at: communications@ngocentre.org.vn.