

A 21 February news release from the Ban Terminator Campaign reported on Monsanto's revised pledge on Terminator. Whereas the company made a public commitment in 1999 not to use Terminator technology, its new pledge suggests that it would use Terminator seeds in non-food crops and does not rule out other uses in the future. Now Monsanto's Director of Public Policy has written an apology to the Ban Terminator Campaign and concedes that it didn't really mean it would consider using Terminator in non-food crops.

In ETC Group's view, Monsanto's modified text was not a mistake or an accident. When Hope Shand of ETC Group spoke to Monsanto representative Roger Krueger in January, he indicated that Monsanto's position was not to use Terminator in food crops. After a series of communications between Lucy Sharratt of the Ban Terminator Campaign and Monsanto, the company has officially backed down. Monsanto's apology and related email correspondence appear below. Despite Monsanto's renewed pledge not to develop or use "genetic engineering methods that result in sterile seeds," ETC Group notes that the company's pledge leaves the door open and does not rule out future development of the technology. Monsanto's pledge still allows the company to change its position on any aspect of its pledge at any time. ETC Group will continue to monitor Monsanto's pledge and actions related to Terminator.

February 27, 2006

Email from Diane Herndon, Director of Public Policy, Monsanto, to Lucy Sharratt, Ban Terminator Campaign

**From:** "HERNDON, DIANE B [AG/1000]" <diane.b.herndon@monsanto.com>

**Date:** February 27, 2006 4:23:37 PM EST

**To:** <lucy@bantermiantor.org>

**Subject: FW: Request for further clarification from Monsanto.**

Dear Ms. Sharratt,

We apologize for any confusion caused by the added language "in food crops" that appeared in the discussion of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs) in our last Pledge Report. We stand by our commitment to not use genetic engineering methods that result in sterile seeds. Period. The intent of the article was to distinguish the "terminator" technology -- which as you know is one type of GURT -- from other GURTs that can use biological means to address important stewardship and business mandates -- such as the type that would turn off the expression of the biotech trait in the next generation of seed while not affecting all other characteristics of the seed and keeping the seed viable in subsequent generations (specifically, the T-GURTs, as you point out). The 2005 Pledge Report now appears as a PDF of the printed book, but we are in the process of reworking our Web site and will be able to remove the confusing language as part of the redesign.

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Please reaffirm our commitments with those in your networks.

Sincerely,

Diane Herndon  
Director, Public Policy  
Monsanto

Note: copies of the email above sent to: Hugh Grant, CEO Monsanto Company. Judith Rodin, President, The Rockefeller Foundation. Gordon Conway, Chief Science Advisor, UK Department for International Development, and Former President, The Rockefeller Foundation

February 24, 2006

Letter from Lucy Sharratt, Ban Terminator Campaign, to Tony Combes, Director of Corporate Affairs, Monsanto UK

*Dear Mr Combes,*

*Thank you for your e-mail received earlier this afternoon (Friday, February 24th). Your response is helpful but it does indicate a contradiction with Monsanto's 2005 pledge on the company website. The website statement clearly says that the company "made a commitment not to commercialize sterile-seed technologies in food crops" – thus leaving open the concern that Monsanto may use Terminator on non-food crops. Your e-mail, on the other hand, is clear that Monsanto will not use Terminator on any of its agricultural crops. These are not identical statements. Which one is correct? If your e-mail is correct - that Monsanto will not use Terminator on any of its agricultural crops, I assume you will correct the misleading language on the website by removing the limitation to food crops.*

*I also recognize the distinction you are making between Terminator (a.k.a. V-GURTS in the language of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and T-GURTS or "trait" control - as you discuss in your e-mail. In reviewing Mr. Krueger's contributions to the CBD discussions, including conversations he has had with Hope Shand of ETC Group, this distinction has not been clear. Simply for the sake of clarity, it would be helpful for Monsanto to avoid the generic term "GURTS" when talking exclusively about either V-GURTS or T-GURTS.*

*Will you be making the necessary change on your website or have we misunderstood your e-mail?*

*Yours sincerely,  
Lucy Sharratt,  
Coordinator,  
Ban Terminator Campaign*

February 24, 2006

Letter from Tony Combes of Monsanto UK to Lucy Sharratt, Ban Terminator Campaign

Dear Ms. Sharratt,

Thank you for your recent letter following my statement to the UK media (<http://www.monsanto.co.uk/news/ukshowlib.phtml?uid=9950> )

and for taking the time to ask for clarification about our Pledge Report policies and commitments.

We have not changed our position, first taken in 1999, not to use the so-called "terminator" technology that renders seeds sterile through genetic engineering. This applies to all of our agricultural crops.

We opened the discussion about genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) in the 2005 Pledge Report to distinguish the "terminator" technology - which as you know is just one type of GURT -- from other GURTs that can use biological means to address important stewardship and business mandates, such as a type that would simply turn off the biotech trait in the next generation of seed while not affecting all the other characteristics of the seed and keeping the seed viable in subsequent generations.

This area of genetic enhancement using trait switching is still very early in concept development, but we are studying it as a potentially useful technology which should be considered for future research and potentially products.

At the international conventions in which he participated, representing the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Seed Federation, Dr. Roger Krueger carried the message that GURTs in general could potentially provide some useful applications and should be examined and explored on a case-by-case basis. He did not advocate for the use of "terminator" technology specifically.

I hope this addresses your concerns. Please let our Director of Public Policy, Diane Herndon at Monsanto in St. Louis know if you have any additional questions concerning The Pledge.

Yours Sincerely,  
Tony Combes  
director of corporate affairs

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February 22, 2006

Letter from Lucy Sharratt, Ban Terminator Campaign, to Tony Combes, Director of Corporate Affairs, Monsanto UK

*RE: Request for Clarification regarding Terminator Technology for non-food crops*

*Dear Mr. Combes,*

*I am writing on behalf of the Ban Terminator Campaign, endorsed by over 370 organisations across the world, to request an urgent clarification regarding Monsanto's new position on Terminator Technology, particularly regarding its development and commercialisation in non-food crops. In a press statement issued yesterday, Wednesday 22 February 2006, you referred to page 29 of Monsanto's 2005 Pledge Report saying, "We stand by our 1999 commitment not to commercialise sterile seed technologies in food crops". However your 1999 public commitment, as made in an open letter to the then-President of the Rockefeller Foundation, did not limit Monsanto's commitment to 'food crops'. This appears to be a new qualification by Monsanto and a significant change to your pledge.*

*Could you please clarify whether Monsanto's ongoing commitment not to commercialise sterile seed technologies extends to all crops or is now simply limited to 'food crops'?*

*If Monsanto's pledge not to commercialise Terminator now excludes non-food crops from its scope, could you also please explain why you have chosen to make this alteration and which stakeholders were consulted and engaged in this decision-making process? Could you also please clarify whether Monsanto currently has any development underway involving sterility traits in cotton, grass, trees, flax or other non-food crops? In yesterday's statement, you also say that the development of Terminator Technology "does not involve us." Despite this, we notice that your colleague Dr. Roger Krueger has been a highly visible advocate of this technology at successive meetings of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity: SBSTTA 9 in Montreal (March 2003), COP7 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (March 2004), the meeting of SBSTTA 10 in Bangkok, Thailand (February 2005), and the Working Group on 8j in Granada Spain (January 2006), as well as on the "Ad-Hoc Technical Expert Group on the Potential Impacts of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies on Smallholder Farmers, Indigenous and Local Communities and Farmers' Rights." Dr. Krueger also co-authored the International Seed Federation's 2003 paper on GURTs which argues that Terminator is "a technology with large potential benefits to farmers of all sizes and economic conditions throughout the world."*

*Can we also expect Monsanto's involvement in discussions on Terminator at the upcoming meetings of the CBD in Curitiba next month?*

*We look forward to your response.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Lucy Sharratt.*

*Coordinator, Ban Terminator Campaign [lucy@banterminator.org](mailto:lucy@banterminator.org) [www.banterminator.org](http://www.banterminator.org)*

*cc. Hugh Grant, CEO Monsanto Company. Judith Rodin, President, The Rockefeller Foundation. Gordon Conway, Chief Science Advisor, UK Department for International Development, and Former President, The Rockefeller Foundation.*

February 22, 2006

From Tony Combes, Monsanto UK - Statement to the UK Media:

## **Terminator Technology Still Does Not Even Exist**

In response to media enquiries (following unsubstantiated allegations that sterile seed technology could be commercialised), Monsanto in the UK responded: "Research on this technology remains incomplete, as it was in 1999 and any development still does not involve us; likewise, its potential future commercialisation is not part of our plans either."

Page 29 of our 2005 Pledge Report includes confirmation that we stand by our 1999 commitment not to commercialise sterile seed technologies in food crops, and how we "constantly re-evaluate this stance as the technology develops" THIS IS NOT NEW, AS WE ALSO SAID IN THE 1999 OPEN LETTER...."We are not currently investing resources to develop these technologies, but we do not rule out their future development and use for gene protection or their possible agronomic benefits"

Monsanto UK's Director of Corporate Affairs, Tony Combes commented "We have NOT changed our policy and it is nonsense to suggest farmers in developing countries cannot trust us. Over 8 million did last year, along with other biotech companies, and that number increases each year as millions of growers in developing countries realise the environmental, economic and personal benefits of this scale-neutral technology on their land. If you don't plant GM seeds, you don't pay anything towards the technology. It is bunkum and balderdash to suggest otherwise"

[Click here for Monsanto's 4th October 1999 commitment not to commercialise the technology](#)

[Click here for Monsanto 2005 Pledge Report](#)

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