Answer to interview with environmental activist *Mark Lynas* on his about face on the issue of genetically modified foods

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In this interview Mr Lynas says that one should look at the position fo established bodies of scientists in order to decide what to believe. He thinks it inconsistent to believe a scientific body on one issue such as climate change and refute their position on gmos on the other.

Here is a quick answer to that. Most research on climate change is performed by independent scientists in universities and governments around the world. What delayed the recognition of the problem was research and public relations efforts by industry (especially the petroleum industry) in making people believe the problem was not proven and did not exist.

Scientists who are ‘*experts’* on climate change and determine that policy are not the same as those who are ‘*experts’* on gmos and determine this policy. While climate change research is mostly occurring in the public domain, it is exactly the opposite on gmos: independent research is stifled. There are many examples of scientists who found their funding and even jobs evaporated after reporting negative gmo findings. If any of them pursues the issue, their results, competence and reputation are relentlessly attacked until they have to spend their time defending their position and reputation rather than producing new research. This is not new knowledge. It has been extensively documented as the bread and butter strategy of industry. The book *When Smoke Ran Like* *Water* by Devra Davis (2002) give detailed examples. Furthermore, anyone wanting to do independent gmo research (assuming they can still find funding) cannot obtain the seeds to work with.

This makes most of the ‘*experts’* on gmos paid industry lackeys. Of course they will toot their own horn and want us to believe there is no more discussion on the issue and that gmos are great for the world.

The only agreement I see is that gmo gene contamination is now global and has spread through the ecosystems where herbicide and insect-resistant crops are planted. It is also so widespread in our food system that the food industry recently spent close to $50M in PR and disinformation to very narrowly defeat a California bill to label gmo foods. The vote counting has now been questioned after irregularities moving 150,000 YES votes to NO were uncovered.

Perhaps there is room eventually for gmos who attempt to solve real problems such as nutrition or drought resistance (as long as it does not imply chemical pesticides) but their effects on health and environment have to be tested first, while the effects of current GMO crops were not.

The current gmo reality is herbicide resistant crops first and insect resistance second. Independent research in these two fields indicate no better production, the widespread development of weed and insect resistance, increased use of pesticides on the crops, soil impoverishment, and large increase of diseases in crops planted where RoundUp has been used. Insect-resistant gmo crops kill predatory insects and livestock eating the straw. How exactly does that benefit agriculture and the world?

In conclusion, the current gmo reality is herbicide and insect resistant crops which are now documented to be ineffective in increasing yields with many reported negative health and environmental effects. It’s hard to believe in one-sided gmo ‘industry science’ that was accepted on a basis of equivalence without the benefits of real science to evaluate effects, and that works so hard to stifle other points of view.