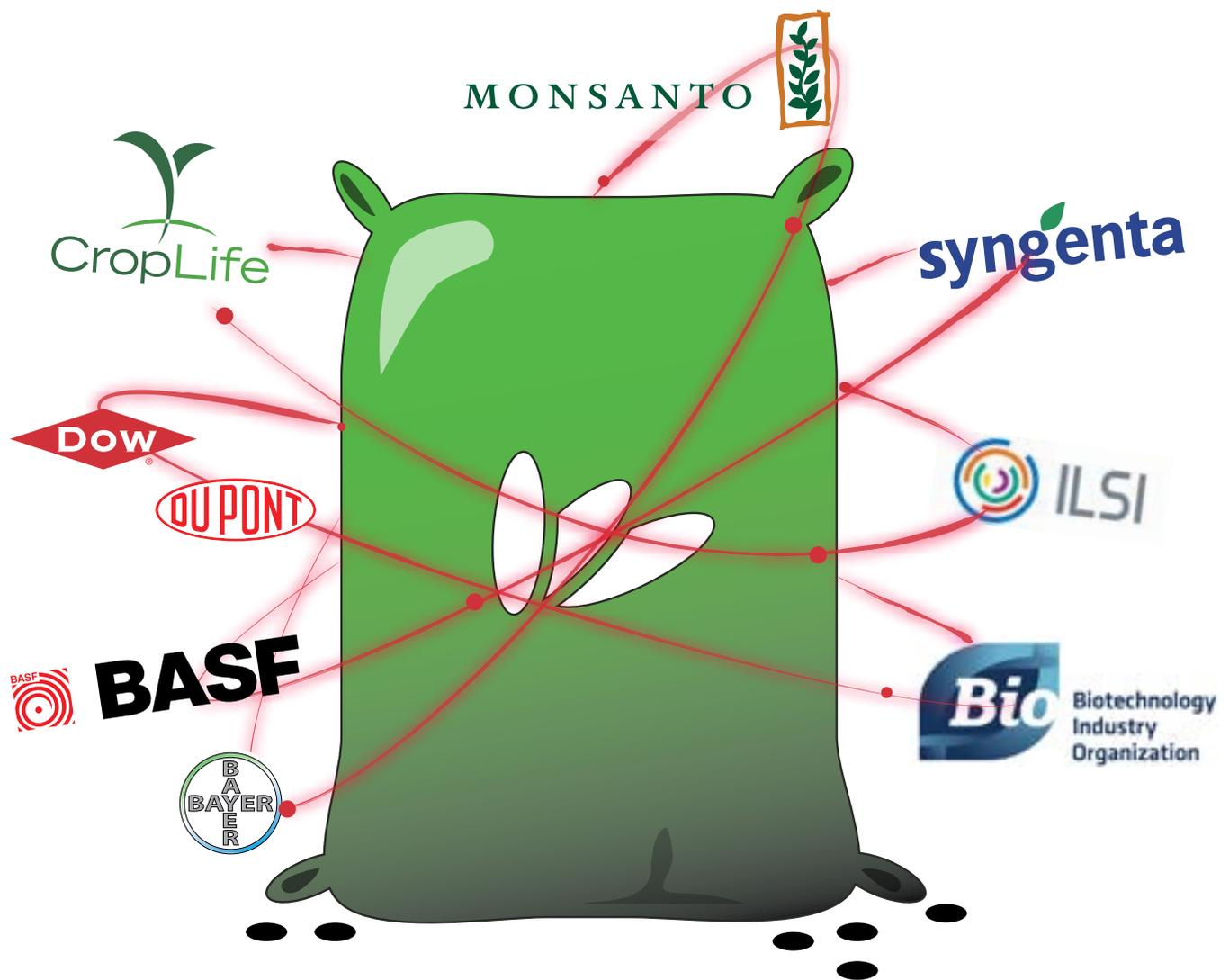


MONSANTO LOBBYING: AN ATTACK ON US, OUR PLANET AND DEMOCRACY



INTRODUCTION

Corporations like Monsanto have limitless resources to buy political power through lobbying. Not only are they represented by numerous lobbying associations at every level from local to global, they also have an army of hired-gun lobbyists, fund scientists to act as their mouthpiece, and participate in 'greenwashing' projects.

EU institutions and the US government often actively solicit corporations to lobby them, giving corporations privileged access to decision-making. This perverse symbiosis allows corporations to capture decision-making, but leads to hollowed out democracy, environmental disaster, and grave social injustice.

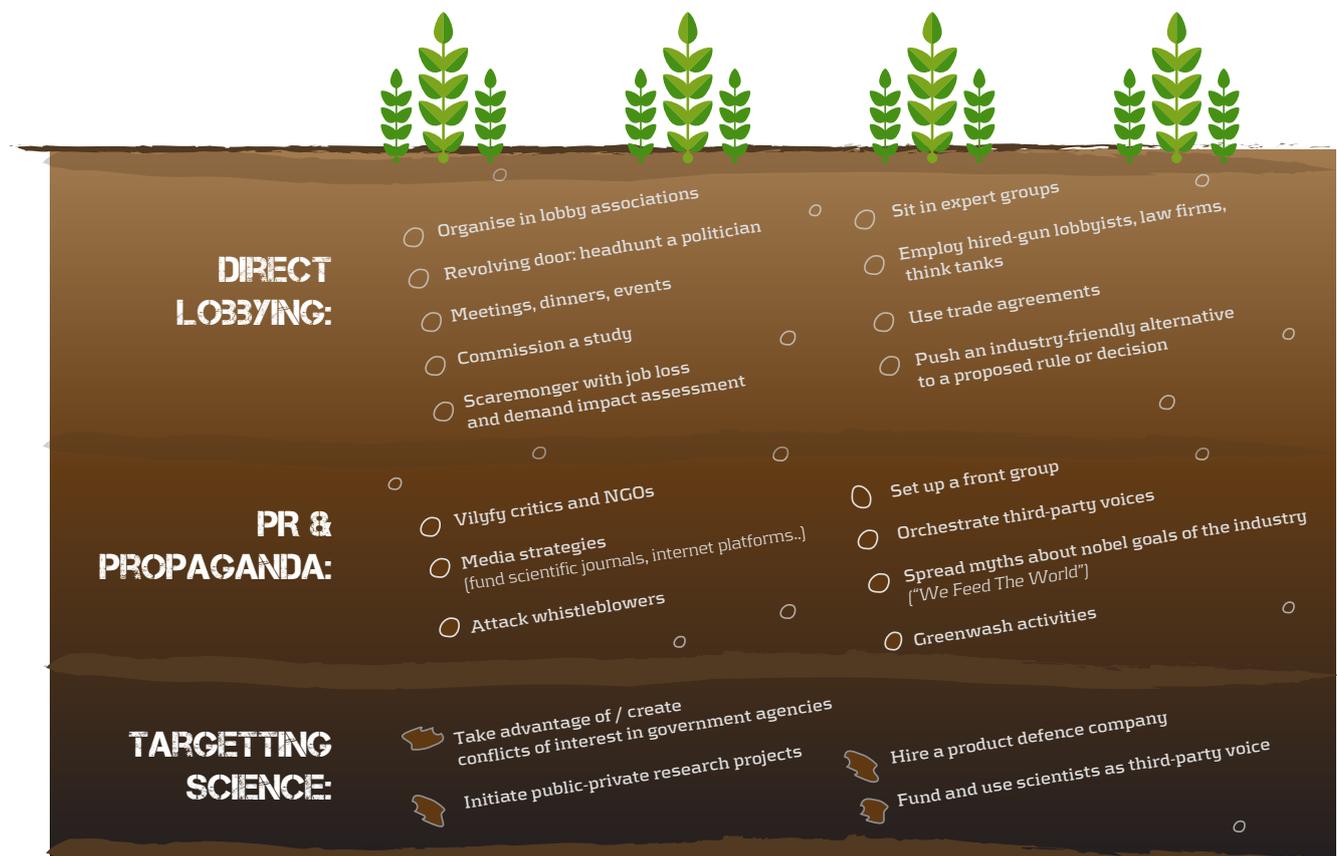
There are roughly three fields of industry lobbying: directly targeting decision-makers; PR and propaganda; and undermining science. Broadly three types of actors exist: those giving the orders, those following them, and those who are accomplices to these attempts.

This short guide, published at the occasion of the International Monsanto Tribunal in The Hague, exposes some of Monsanto's key lobbying strategies and tools, illustrated with examples from different parts of the world.

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LOBBY STRATEGIES

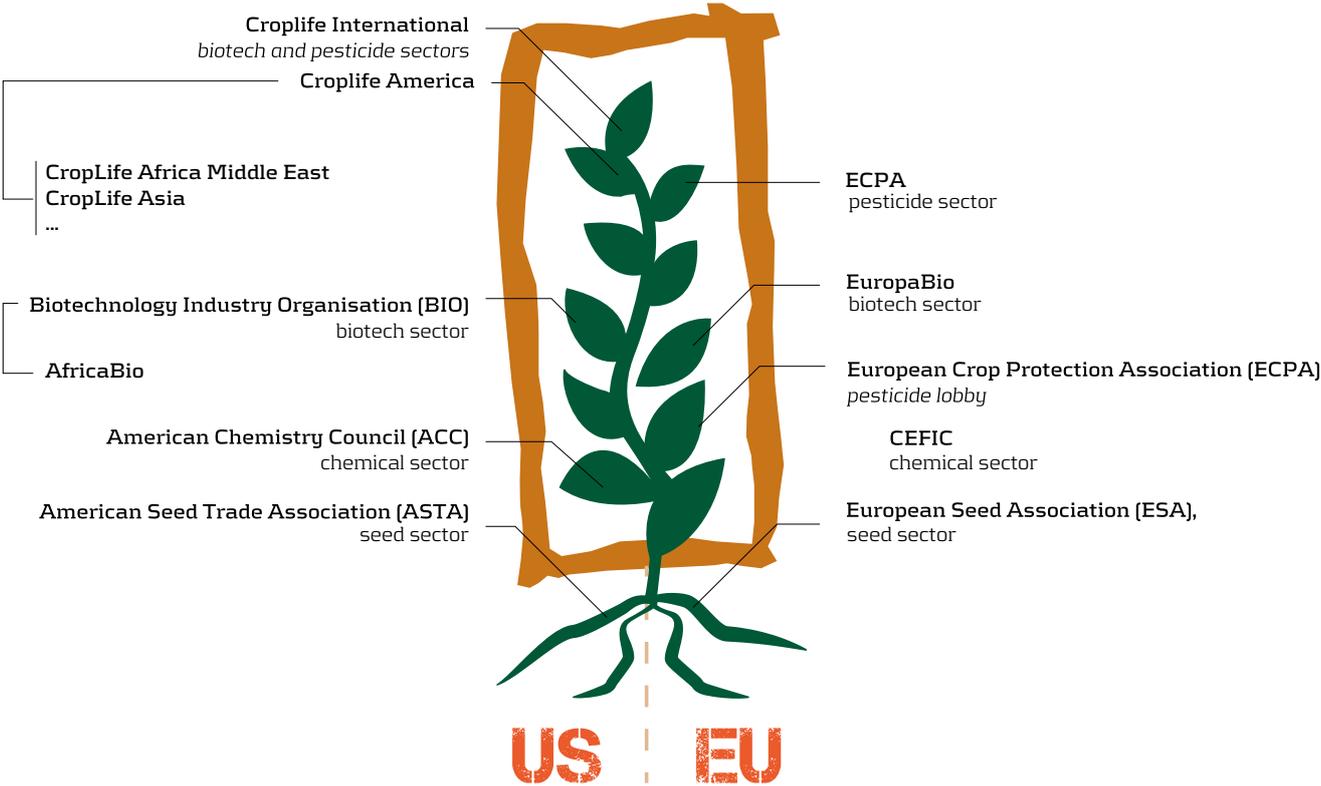


COMPETITORS OR ALLIES? LOBBY ASSOCIATIONS

Monsanto’s lobbying to a large extent takes place via lobby associations, organized at global, regional, and national level. Here, corporations operating in the same sector coordinate joint lobbying efforts for their common interests. For Monsanto, this coordination happens principally through chemical and pesticide, biotech and seeds lobby groups. These groups coordinate many of the direct lobbying activities and messages.

The global lobbying association Croplife International unites the biotech and pesticide sectors - which are largely the same corporations. Its member list includes the biggest agribusiness companies (Monsanto, Bayer, BASF, Dow/Dupont, Syngenta, etc) and the regional biotech and pesticide associations (including BIO, EuropaBio, AfricaBio; and the European Crop Protection Association ECPA, CropLife America, CropLife Africa Middle East, and CropLife Asia, etc.).

In the EU, Monsanto’s lobby associations include the seed lobby European Seed Association (ESA), pesticide lobby European Crop Protection Association (ECPA) and biotech lobby EuropaBio. These lobby groups’ members include the corporations but also national-level associations, which makes it easy to exert pressure at both EU and national level. In the US, the equivalent organisations are the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA), Croplife America, and the Biotechnology Industry Organisation (BIO).



Monsanto's interests are also defended by the chemical sector lobby associations. In the US this is the American Chemistry Council (ACC), and in the EU, the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC). CEFIC is the biggest single lobby group in the EU, with around 135 staff, and has Bayer, BASF, and Syngenta among its members (Monsanto is not a member).

Lobbying strategies are closely aligned between different sectors in the industrial food chain. The Agri-Food Chain Coalition (AFCC) unites the pesticide, biotech, animal feed, food and fertilizer industries, who jointly push¹ the EU to cut regulations and to speed up approvals of GMOs and pesticides.

The pesticide lobby groups are often aided by (industrial) farmers' organisations. In Europe, the union of large farmers COPA-COGECA regularly teams up with ECPA, when it comes to defending GMOs and pesticides. In the US, Monsanto is member of lobby groups such as the US Grains Council and supports activities of the American Soybean Association (ASA) for its members, soy growers.²

Lobby campaigns are also coordinated between these sectoral lobby associations. At the global level, including climate and trade agreements, Monsanto, Bayer and other agribusiness companies are represented by lobby platforms that cover all major industrial sectors such as the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), BusinessEurope, the Trans-Atlantic Business Council (TABC), and for a green touch, the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

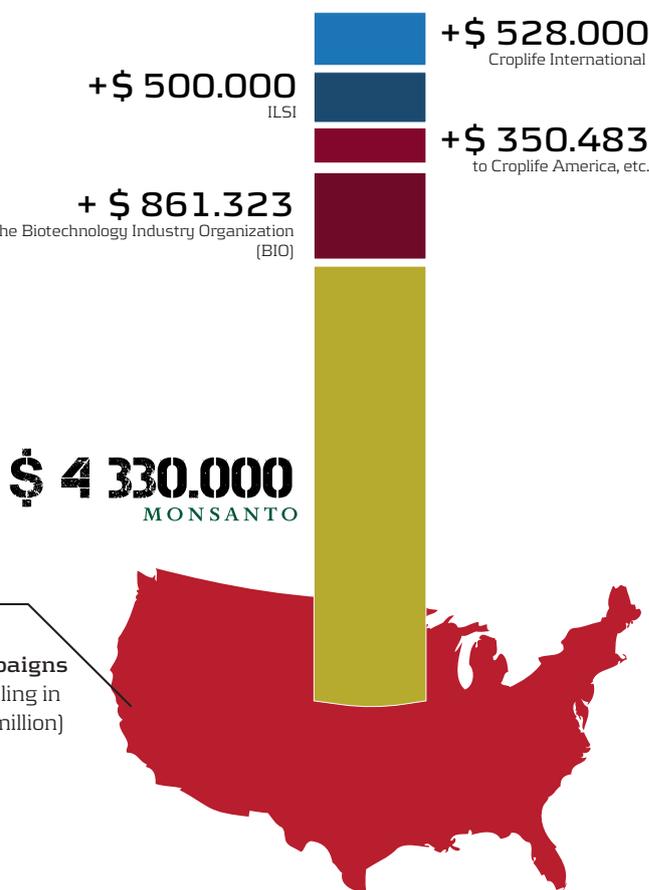
Biotech corporations like Monsanto are increasingly buying up local seed companies, thereby also becoming more influential in national seed associations. The African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) includes various Monsanto, Syngenta, and Bayer national chapters and even the North American seed lobby ASTA is a member!³ AFSTA has pushed for new intellectual property rights for companies at the expense of farmers' rights to their seed through the 2015 Arusha Protocol.⁴ In the Netherlands, Monsanto has bought up vegetable seed businesses like De Ruiter Seeds and Seminis. In this way Monsanto has an entry into the national seed association Plantum, challenging Plantum's opposition to patents on seeds.⁵

AVAILABLE FIGURES ON MONSANTO LOBBYING SPENDING (US)



+ Monsanto's election campaign donations
\$ 662.000, mostly to Republican candidates from corn and soy growing states.

+ Monsanto's state-level campaigns
(against GM labelling in California: \$ 8.1 million)



BIG BUDGETS TO BUY POWER

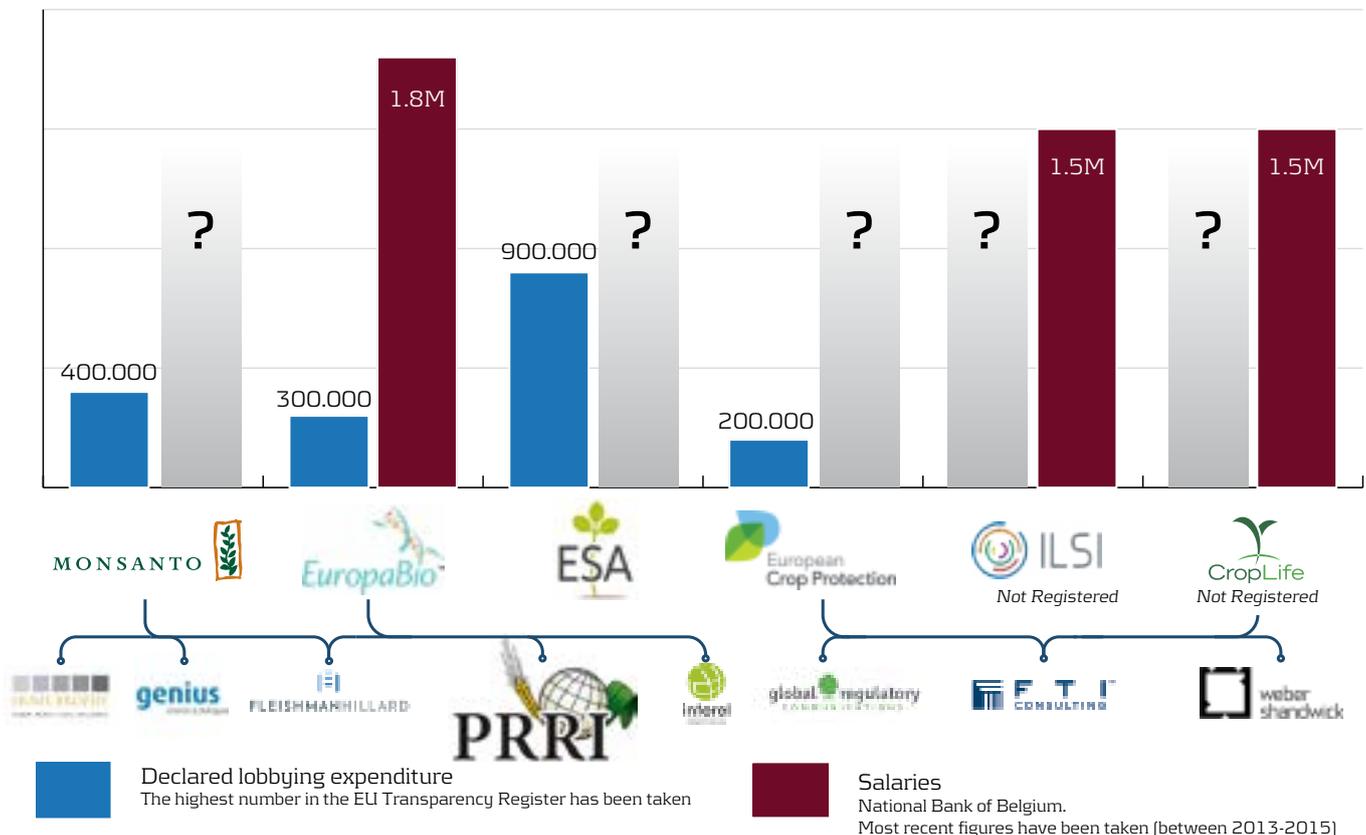
Figures on lobby spending that can be found in the EU and US lobbying registers are very limited and only represent a fraction of the real amount that corporations spend to bend the rules. The figures presented below do not yet include the costs for studies commissioned from 'independent scientists', PR campaigns or the many lawyers it hires to defend its interests in the political arena.

Brussels is the second lobbying capital in the world after Washington. The EU does not demand lobbying transparency from the estimated 20,000-30,000 lobbyists that roam the Brussels EU quarter on a daily basis. The EU Transparency Register for lobbyists is voluntary, and is riddled with inaccurate and misleading information. Many do not even sign up, such as the International Life Science Institute (ILSI) that Monsanto is part of, the Glyphosate Task Force (GTF) that is run by Monsanto, nor the German lobby firm Genius, that runs the GTF website. According to Monsanto's own estimates the company spent around €400,000 directly on lobbying in Brussels (mid-2014 - mid-2015). But the real figure is much higher.⁶

In the US corporations are obliged to register who lobbies for them, on what topic and with what budget. Based on these figures, the non-profit website Opensecrets.org shows that Monsanto and Bayer together spent \$120 million on lobbying in Washington over the last decade.

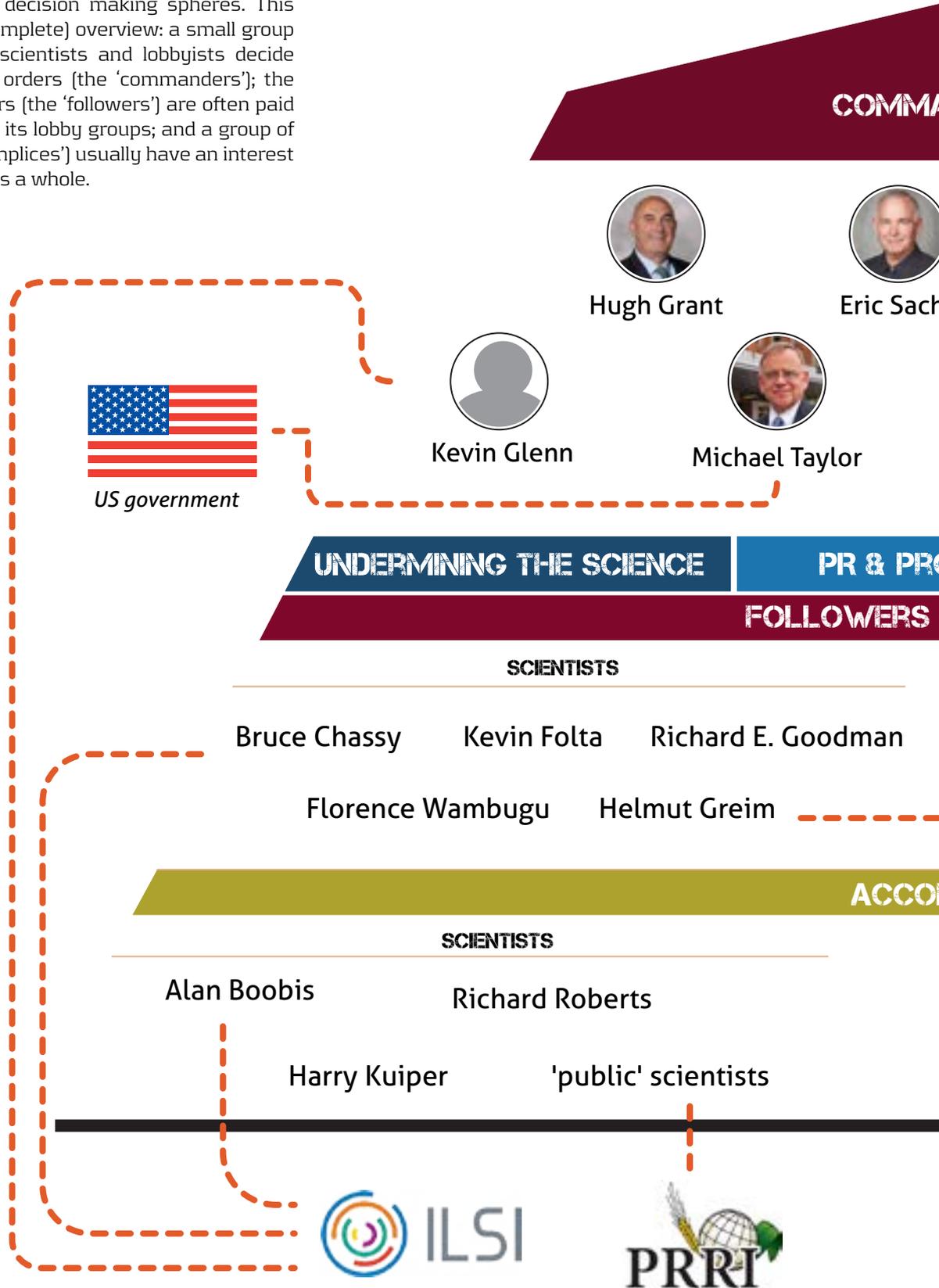
In the US, Monsanto spent \$4.33 million on its own lobbying in 2015⁷. In addition, Monsanto discloses on its website⁸ that it paid in total \$2 million to the many lobby associations it is part of like the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) and CropLife America. But the list is still not complete, as it does not include ILSI for instance. An overview of ILSI sponsors of 2012, obtained by US Right To Know, shows that no less than 43 per cent of its budget in that year came from Monsanto (\$500,000) and its lobby platform CropLife International (\$528,000).⁹ This is certainly not yet the whole picture: it does not include Monsanto's state-level campaigns (against GM labelling in California: a reported \$8.1 million¹⁰) nor election campaign funding. Monsanto makes many campaign donations mostly to Republican candidates from corn and soy growing states.¹¹

AVAILABLE FIGURES ON MONSANTO LOBBYING SPENDING (EU)



WHO IS WHO?

A relatively small group of names appears time and again in the international pro-GMO and pro-pesticide PR campaigns, and in the decision making spheres. This graph gives a (very incomplete) overview: a small group of top-level Monsanto scientists and lobbyists decide on strategies and give orders (the 'commanders'); the executors of those orders (the 'followers') are often paid directly by Monsanto or its lobby groups; and a group of collaborators (the 'accomplices') usually have an interest in the biotech industry as a whole.



ANDERS



Robert Fraley



Richard Garnett



Robert Horsch

LOBBY TOOL: GREENWASHING

In 2013, Monsanto's Robert Fraley and Marc van Montagu (founder of the Flemish Biotechnology Institute and chairman of PRRI) won the Monsanto-sponsored World Food Prize, dubbed by industry as the 'Nobel Prize for Food'. The foundation that administers the prize has received contributions from companies, including a \$5 million pledge from Monsanto in 2008.

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

PROPAGANDA

DIRECT LOBBYING

OF THE ORDERS

INFLUENCING POLICY



Jay Byrne

lobby firms

law firms

IMPLICES

PUBLISHERS

Henry Miller

Jon Entine

Mark Lynas

Patrick Moore

ecetoc

US: LOBBYING THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT - REVOLVING DOORS

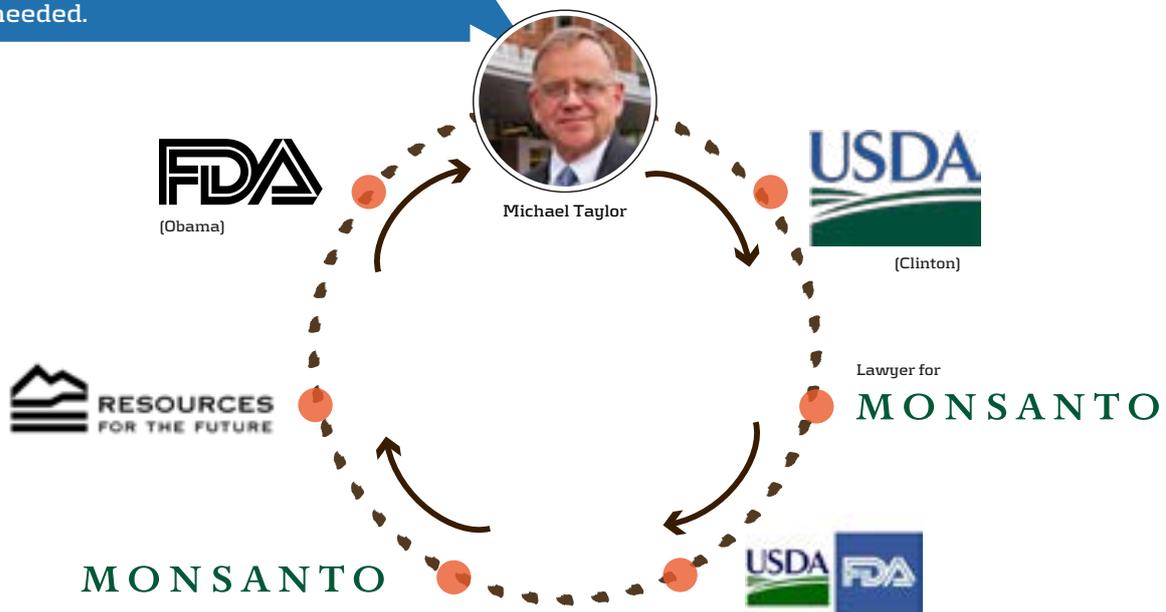
LOBBY TOOL

The 'revolving door' is a classic lobbying strategy: a corporation or lobby firm recruits a former high official or politician onto their staff, who is then in a good position to lobby former colleagues, and who knows how the system works from the inside. The revolving doors can also spin in the other direction, that is, when someone from within the industry moves to a key position in a public authority.

The revolving doors spin in countries around the globe, but nowhere as fast as in the US: according to the Centre for Responsive Politics, more than half of CropLife America's lobbyists in the period 2013-2014 previously held government jobs. Similarly, in the US 37 out of 48 Monsanto lobbyists registered in 2015-2016 previously held government jobs.

The most emblematic case is Michael Taylor, who has gone through the revolving doors four times during his career¹². Taylor first entered the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before becoming a lawyer for Monsanto. Taylor returned to the FDA in 1991 and later moved to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). In both roles he dealt with the US policy on how (not) to regulate GM foods. Taylor then went back to working for Monsanto as Vice President public policy until 2000. But in 2010 the Obama administration appointed him again as a senior adviser to the FDA.

Taylor is one of the architects of the US 'substantial equivalence' principle, that assumes that GM and non-GM foods are 'equivalent' if they have comparable amounts of a few basic components. No further safety testing is then needed.



LOBBY TOOL

CAN'T GET WHAT YOU WANT? PUSH AN INDUSTRY-FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVE

In 2007 Obama promised US citizens the labelling of GM foods as a “right to know what they buy”. In many states, campaigns to get GM foods labeled took off. Monsanto along with the food industry lobby Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) pushed at federal level for a fake GM labelling act - dubbed by citizens groups the ‘Denying Americans the Right to Know’ (DARK) Act, as it would hide information about GM ingredients behind a bar code. It would also ban state-level GM labelling rules. The DARK Act was signed into law by Obama in summer 2016. The European food industry lobby is called FoodDrinkEurope and its Director General Mella Frewen comes from Monsanto.

LOBBY TOOL

GOVERNMENT AS INDUSTRY LOBBYISTS:

The wiki cable leaks have shown that the US State Department has been particularly active in advancing Monsanto’s interests abroad. The leaks provide evidence that US embassies and consulates in Argentina, Germany, Slovakia, Spain, Egypt, and South Africa all promoted Monsanto’s products or position in those countries. According to the leaked cables one memo even included an “advocacy toolkit for diplomatic posts,” and in Indonesia, in 2005, diplomats continued to lobby on behalf of Monsanto, after the company paid a \$1.5 million fine for bribing an Indonesian official.”¹³



EU: MONSANTO HIDES BEHIND LOBBY ASSOCIATIONS

Monsanto has adopted a very under the radar approach in the EU, often hiding behind the lobby associations or lobby groups with unfamiliar names notably ILSI (International Life Sciences Institute). Monsanto's Brussels lobbying office is located in the Monsanto Building overlooking Monsanto Park. Its name, however, has long since disappeared from the facade.

The EU does not demand
lobbying transparency

30.000
lobbyists

that roam the Brussels EU quarter daily



LOBBY TOOL

EU: LOBBY ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) plays a key role in the authorisation of thousands of products ending up in the food chain (GMOs, pesticides, food additives, nanotech products). But there are some fundamental problems:

- Nearly 60% of EFSA's experts had ties with biotech, food, or pesticide companies (2013)¹⁴. In the past, many experts and members of the management board of EFSA had close ties to the industry lobby group ILSI (International Life Sciences Institute), funded by Monsanto all the major food and biotech corporations. Since a few years EFSA no longer allows experts to have close ties to ILSI.
- Studies to judge risks of products are done by the industry itself. Independent research is often not available or is dismissed or ignored.
- For pesticides the details of those studies have been kept secret for the claimed reason of 'business confidentiality'.

The International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI), with offices in the US, Asia, South-America, and Europe, is primarily funded by its member corporations including Monsanto, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, and many more. ILSI organizes workshops and activities bringing together scientists from industry and governments. These activities in reality act as a vehicle to promote business-friendly 'scientific' concepts and methodologies to be introduced into food and health policies.²⁵

ILSI'S IMPACT ON EU GMO RULES

The ESFA-ILSI connection has had a marked impact on the risk assessment of GMOs in the EU. Harry Kuiper, the Dutch Chair of the GMO expert panel (2003-2012), at the same time was part of an ILSI task force on standards for GM risk assessment, headed by a Monsanto employee, Kevin Glenn.¹⁵ This task force promoted the use of a concept called “comparative assessment” - the EU version of the US argument that GM and non-GMO are substantially the same (“substantially equivalent”), and argued against the need for animal feeding trials. The ILSI recommendations were partly taken on board by EFSA, as ILSI itself proudly reported. In a third role, Kuiper coordinated an EU-funded public-private research project on GM risk assessment, ENTRANSFOOD, in which Monsanto took part. This project further promoted the concept of “comparative assessment”.

Suzy Renckens, who was head of GMO Unit at EFSA in that time, went through the revolving door in 2008 to become a lobbyist for Syngenta.¹⁶

KEEPING ROUNDUP ON THE MARKET

The WHO's cancer agency IARC found in 2015 that glyphosate (the active ingredient in Monsanto's herbicide Roundup) “probably causes cancer in humans”. Monsanto was up in arms - and asked for the IARC report's retraction¹⁷, saying it was “junk science”. IARC on the contrary only used published scientific literature, and worked with a panel of independent cancer specialists.

The battle to keep glyphosate on the market in the EU was coordinated by the Glyphosate Task Force (GTF), a Monsanto-led lobby platform that is run from the offices of PR firm Hume Brophy in the EU quarter. Monsanto lobbyist Richard Garnett is its spokesperson. Based on unpublished industry-funded studies presented by the GTF, EFSA concluded that glyphosate was “probably not” carcinogenic. The IARC and a hundred scientists urged the European Commission in an open letter “to disregard the flawed EFSA finding”.¹⁸

At the same time, another international panel on pesticides concluded that glyphosate residues in food were “unlikely” to cause cancer in humans.¹⁹ Monsanto's Robert Fraley was cheering on twitter.²⁰ The panel was chaired by ILSI Europe's vice-president Alan Boobis. He is also a former EFSA expert who had to leave the agency because of his ILSI role.

THE WAR TO GET NEXT GENERATION GMOS UNTESTED AND UNLABELED

Over the past years, the European Commission has been trying to decide whether a set of new genetic engineering techniques should fall under EU GMO legislation or not. Since 2011, the industry lobby has been orchestrated by the Dutch lobby firm Schuttelaar & Partners through the so-called New Breeding Techniques (NBT) Platform²¹. Only Syngenta is officially member of this Platform, but Dow and Bayer also attended meetings set up by the NBT Platform. In June 2016, Monsanto had a lobby meeting with EU Health Commissioner Andriukaitis about this topic, along with Limagrain, Syngenta, EuropaBio, and Dow/Dupont.²²

LOBBY TOOL HIRED-GUN LOBBYISTS

Schuttelaar and Partners are no novice to below-the-radar lobby campaigns for biotech clients. In 1995, the firm was hired by Monsanto to secure a smooth introduction for the first imports of a GM crop - Monsanto's herbicide-tolerant RoundupReady soy - to Europe²³. Schuttelaar & Partners was set up by Marcel Schuttelaar, a former environmental campaigner. With false promises that RoundupReady crops would lead to reduced pesticide use, this firm helped pave the way for the expansion of GM soy monocultures in South America.

LOBBY TOOL FRONT GROUP EVENT

Lobby firm Edelman in Brussels organised a ‘GM food tasting’ event for Members of the European Parliament in 2010. This was supposedly done on behalf of the ‘Farmers Biotech Network’, which, however, appeared to be a front group for biotech lobby group EuropaBio, that had paid for the event.²⁴

A TROJAN HORSE? PUSHING GM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

African governments and universities have been target of strong industry lobbying to get GM crops commercialised on the continent. The goal is both to conquer a vast new market, supported by strong patent protection, and to promote the “We Feed the World” argument for GM.

LOBBY TOOL

AFRICA: SET UP PRO-GM LOBBY GROUPS

Monsanto and others have funded several platforms and lobby groups to promote GM in Africa. These include the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) program.

Many projects and activities are sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It is crucial to note that the Gates Foundation has considerable investments in Monsanto shares.²⁷ The Gates Foundation also funds the public-private partnership project Water Efficient maize for Africa (WEMA) that Monsanto is involved in.²⁸ Several Monsanto employees moved on to work for the Gates Foundation, like Robert Horsch who helped launch the AGRA. The Gates Foundation’s big support for AATF is specifically to raise “awareness on agricultural biotechnology for improved understanding and appreciation”.²⁹

ISAAA funders past and present include Bayer, Monsanto, Syngenta, and Dupont/Pioneer, as well as the USDA and USAID. Monsanto’s Robert Fraley used to be on its board. Florence Wambugu, a Monsanto-trained scientist headed ISAAA’s AfriCenter, with Monsanto’s Gerard Barry, and later established her own biotech lobby group called Africa Harvest Biotechnology Foundation International, funded by CropLife International, but also by the Gates Foundation, Rockefeller, DuPont USA and USAID.



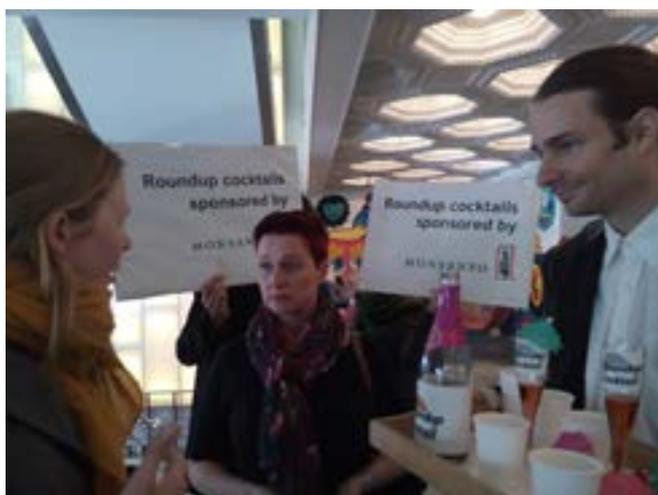
Monsanto and other corporations are involved in developing crops for farmers in Africa, sometimes donating hybrid seeds or making patented GM traits available royalty-free. However, Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant admitted (commenting on some hybrid seed donation in Malawi), “A piece of this will be philanthropic, but there’s a piece that’s the ground floor of a whole new generation of customers.”³⁰ Indeed, adopting the new crops would mean that farmers shift from reusing and exchanging their own seeds to buying seed protected by plant breeders rights.³¹

ASIA: GOLDEN RICE, THE SILVER BULLET?

'Golden Rice' has been at the core of the GM industry's 'humanitarian' PR spin, claiming that its elevated levels of beta-carotene will be a solution to Vitamin A shortages in malnourished communities. Funded by the Gates Foundation, Rockefeller and USAID, the GM rice is developed by Syngenta and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines. However, Monsanto and Bayer also provided patented technologies "free of charge, for humanitarian purposes."³² Monsanto supported the project in addition by grants for students at the IRRI facilities. However, apart from questions of ownership (intellectual property rights), safety and effectiveness, criticisms include the fact that Golden Rice would replace local rice varieties, and that other solutions are available: Vitamin A supplements (short-term) and access to a diversified diet (longer term).

LOBBY TOOL VILIFY NGO AND GM CRITICS

The GM rice has been under research for well over 20 years, yet its researchers have explained that the rice is still not ready to go to market, and that the effectiveness of Golden Rice in raising levels of Vitamin A in undernourished children has to be verified.^{33 34} Nevertheless, it has been a useful PR tool to vilify Greenpeace and others for opposing 'Golden Rice' as if they were responsible for it not getting to market.



LOBBY TOOL THIRD-PARTY VOICE THE 'APOLOGISING ENVIRONMENTALIST'

A former environmental activist 'seeing the light' and accusing environmental groups for causing widespread poverty and malnourishment makes a good media story. Patrick Moore is a case in point, running the one-man-campaign 'Allow Golden Rice Now!'. He has been lobbying for polluting industries for many years yet keeps identifying himself as 'ex-Greenpeace'.³⁵ In the UK, Mark Lynas made a media splash as a former 'anti-GM activist' apologising for his actions in the past, while grossly overstating his role in the anti-GM movement.³⁶ But even Lynas had to admit that blaming Greenpeace for the 'Golden Rice' delay was "premature".³⁷ The Gates Foundation created a position for Lynas at the Cornell University's 'Alliance for Science' to help 'depolarise the debate on GMOs'.³⁸

In 2016, enters Richard Roberts. He is a Nobel Prize laureate who works at a biotech company and orchestrated the latest episode in this attack, collecting 107 signatures from Nobel laureates to demand Greenpeace to stop their opposition to 'Golden Rice' - ignoring the fact that that opposition is not the cause of 'Golden Rice' not being available.³⁹ A former Monsanto communications employee, Jay Byrne, now running a PR company called V-Fluence, was involved in the press event around this announcement. Byrne's clients include Monsanto and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).⁴⁰

LOBBY TOOL GREENWASH: THE ROUND TABLE ON RESPONSIBLE SOY

Set up in 2005, international NGO WWF teamed up with Monsanto, Syngenta, Cargill, Unilever, Rabobank, and big soy producers from Brazil and Argentina to set up a voluntary certification scheme primarily to stop deforestation for soy production. It hopelessly failed, both in market uptake and in effectiveness²⁵. The Dutch government, which has wasted millions of euros in aid to the scheme, admitted that there was no evidence of any avoided deforestation, nor benefits for small farmers. An ideal scenario for Monsanto: participate in a greenwash scheme that looks good but does not cause any actual damage to profits.

UNDERMINING THE SCIENCE

Several industry-science platforms have been set up to create industry-friendly regulations - that are not based on science - such as ILSI and ECETOC. In addition, Monsanto has paid several scientists to act as its mouthpiece, or sponsored organisations doing the same such as PRRI.

PROMOTING INDUSTRY SCIENCE AS 'SOUND SCIENCE'

Monsanto has been involved in the past with ECETOC (European Centre for Ecotoxicology and Toxicology of Chemicals), an industry-funded 'scientific think tank' whose purpose is to "enhance the quality of chemicals risk assessment". Read: skew them in favour of industry's interests. For instance, in 2012 ECETOC hired product defence company Exponent to counter a scientific report on endocrine disrupting chemicals that was meant to be the basis of EU rules⁴². Product defence companies like Exponent and Gradient Corp employ scientists to perform studies that produce data that suit the client's interest, or to criticise studies that don't. Monsanto hired Exponent to counter scientific doubts on the safety of glyphosate.⁴³

THIRD-PARTY VOICE PRRI: ARE THESE REALLY PUBLIC RESEARCHERS?

PRRI pretends to defend the interest of public researchers in biotechnology.⁴⁴ PRRI received funding in the past from Monsanto and Croplife, as well government and EU grants. Many of PRRI's members have shown to have ties to the industry. PRRI collaborates with EuropaBio in Brussels lobby events.⁴⁵ In the past, PRRI has brought over sizeable delegations of 'public scientists' from the South to UN events with pro-biotech messages.

THE RHETORIC OF 'SOUND SCIENCE'

From tobacco in the 1950s to climate change today, there is now a long history of industry attempts to "manufacture doubt" over scientific evidence that shows harmful effects of their products. Industry claims their studies to be 'sound science', while the inconvenient studies are labelled 'junk science' (other variations used are 'not science-based' or 'not evidence-based'). With TTIP, industry is recycling the notion of 'sound science' to stage an ongoing attack on the EU food safety system, including the precautionary principle.

Industry has set up numerous platforms that aim to pervert science in their interest.

LOBBY TOOL

'SCIENTIFIC' VOICES ECHOING MONSANTO'S MESSAGE

Kevin Folta, University of Florida

blog 'Biofortified Boy' and GMOanswers.com

The NGO US Right To Know obtained emails that show how Folta became a mouthpiece for Monsanto. Folta made a deal with Monsanto in 2013. Monsanto, an considering giving Folta an unrestricted grant of \$25,000, commented: "This is a great 3rd-party approach to developing the advocacy that we're looking to develop".⁴⁶ Folta promised Monsanto a "solid return on this investment". Yet nearly a year after Folta got the Monsanto money, he was still publicly proclaiming: "I have nothing to do with Monsanto."

Folta also made regular contributions to the website GMOanswers.com, run by the Council for Biotechnology Information (CBI), yet another industry outfit funded by Monsanto, BASF, Bayer, Dow, DuPont, Syngenta. PR firm Ketchum in some cases even drafted Folta's answers on this website.

Bruce Chassy, University of Illinois

Academics Review, ILSI, AgBioWorld, Forbes Magazine

Monsanto funded Chassy to support "biotechnology outreach and education activities" and donated \$1.9 million over five years to Chassy's University. Chassy has been in direct contact with Monsanto's chief lobbyist Eric Sachs.⁴⁷ He runs Academics Review, a pro-GM website.⁴⁸ Chassy is also the GMO referent for AgBioWorld, see below. Chassy attacked the Seralini study in a trashy piece in *Forbes Magazine*.⁴⁹ Chassy was also part of the ILSI Task Force on GM risk assessment with Monsanto's Kevin Glenn and EFSA's Harry Kuiper.⁵⁰

Channapatna S Prakash, Tuskegee University

AgBioWorld and AgBioForum

AgBioWorld is an influential listserv that helped to discredit a 2001 scientific paper showing GMO contamination of Mexican corn (Quist and Chapela 2001). As reported by *The Guardian*, AgBioWorld appeared connected to Bivings, a PR firm contracted by Monsanto and directed by Jay Byrnes.⁵¹ AgBioForum is funded by the Illinois-Missouri Biotechnology Alliance (IMBA) that is supported by the US government.

Henry Miller, Hoover Institution

Miller, co-creator with Michael Taylor of the concept of 'substantial equivalence', is involved in AgBioWorld. He has a column in *Forbes Magazine* along with Jon Entine, writing trashy and aggressive papers against whistleblowers and green activists. Miller was engaged in the industry front group 'The Advancement of Sound Science Coalition' (ASSC)⁵² set up by Phillip Morris to combat so-called 'junk science'. ASSC and Miller were at the forefront of the industry attack on the GM labelling law proposal in California.

Seralini's study is fraudulent" "This is a protest industry funded by organic interests.

Jon Entine, UC Davis World Food Center

Genetic Literacy Project (GLP)

Entine publishes regular attacks on scientists or media that raise concerns about the health and environmental risks of GMOs and pesticides. The Genetic Literacy Project published a series⁵³ of articles sponsored by Monsanto (among others by Folta) without disclosing that fact.⁵⁴ A Entine founded ESG MediaMetrics, a 'sustainability' communications firm whose clients included Monsanto.

Roger Beachy, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center,
UC Davis World Food Center

Founding President of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center which was set up with the help of (and sited next door to) Monsanto.⁵⁵ Beachy also went through the revolving door (USDA) under the Obama administration. The Danforth Center has several projects to develop GM crops in Africa, amongst others with the AATF.

Richard E. Goodman, Professor at Nebraska University
Food and Chemical Toxicology (FCT)

Goodman was added to the editorial board of the journal Food and Chemical Toxicology (FCT) after it had published the Séralini study on the effects of Monsanto's GM maize and Roundup on rats.⁵⁶ Emails obtained by US Right to Know⁵⁷ showed that Goodman was receiving project funding from Monsanto (among others) and asked the firm to provide him with arguments to criticise the study. The Séralini study was finally retracted one year later, in November 2013.⁵⁸

Helmut Greim, retired German Professor of Toxicology

Greim was paid by Monsanto (via the company Intertek) to do a review of the IARC findings. This review, published in September 2016, said IARC was wrong and concluded that glyphosate is “not a carcinogen in laboratory animals”.⁵⁹ Alongside representatives of BASF, Bayer and Syngenta, Greim sits on the scientific committee of ECETOC.⁶⁰ Together with Alan Boobis, he was also part of the group of scientists undermining the EU scientific criteria for hormone disrupting chemicals.⁶¹

The UK-based Science Media Centre (SMC) has been set up as a ‘rapid response platform’ to media when studies as Séralini’s come out. SMC orchestrated a campaign to discredit the study, publishing comments from scientists many of whom themselves had conflicts of interest with the biotech industry.⁶²

The Cornell Alliance for Science is a PR project set up with a \$5.6 million grant from the Gates Foundation and that employs Mark Lynas.⁶³ The Cornell Alliance counts the Monsanto-backed ISAAA among its partners.

In 2014, Entine and the Genetic Literacy Project partnered with Academics Review to sponsor a “boot camp” to teach scientists how to “best engage the GMO debate with a sceptical public.” Speakers included Kevin Folta, Bruce Chassy, Val Giddings of BIO and someone from the UK Science Media Center.

'FREE' TRADE AGREEMENTS - THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

The trade agreements TPP, TTIP, and CETA all promote the concept of 'regulatory cooperation', which aims to harmonise rules between trading parties as much as possible, to avoid one party for example adopting a new and higher safety measure, or banning a product. Indeed in TPP, a working group on biotechnology was set up to analyse any law, rule or policy in that field.



Various pesticide and biotech lobbyist have gone through the revolving doors to enter the US Trade Representative's office. With the US Trade Representative Michael Froman coming straight from Wall Street, his Chief Agricultural Negotiator from 2009 to 2015 covering WTO, TPP, and TTIP negotiations was Islam A Siddiqui. Previous to that, Siddiqui was the chief lobbyist for CropLife America. As a trade negotiator, Siddiqui pushed for stronger patent protection for seeds produced by industry. TPP forces all signatories to ratify an agreement (UPOV 91), dubbed in several South-American countries the "Monsanto law" as it would deny ancestral rights to free circulation of seeds and further increase the cost of production for farmers. This would have profound negative implications for food sovereignty and (agricultural) biodiversity.

In Brussels, the agribusiness sector lobbied the European Commission more than anyone else in the run up to the TTIP negotiations. DG Trade actively chased pesticide lobby group ECPA to team up with CropLife America and jointly send a wishlist for TTIP. The lobby groups demanded for instance "significant harmonisation" for pesticide residues in food. Trade unions, environmentalists and consumer groups did not receive such special invites.⁶⁴

After a TTIP negotiation round in 2014, the seed lobby groups ESA and ASTA joined forces with the US Trade Representative in setting up a meeting with the EU delegation in Washington to argue that there is "no specific need" to regulate new GM techniques and that the EU should allow contamination of conventional seeds with unauthorized (illegal) GM seeds.

CETA for its part has as an objective to "minimize adverse trade impacts of regulatory practices related to biotechnology products", aiming to get the EU to speed up GMO approvals and to tolerate contamination with GMOs that are illegal.

MORE SECRETS, PLEASE!

Corporations from all sectors to push successfully for even stronger rights to keep information and corporate data secret from the public: 'trade secrets'.⁶⁵ This will seriously endanger the work of journalists, whistle-blowers, unionists, independent researchers and NGOs. New and very similar legal proposals were discussed at the same time in the EU and in the US. Trade secret rules have now been largely harmonised across the Atlantic - TTIP avant la lettre. In Brussels the corporations organised their lobby through the 'Trade Secrets & Innovation Coalition', with DuPont as one of its members and working jointly with chemical lobby group CEFIC.⁶⁶

CAPTURING UN BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE TALKS

Monsanto lobbying at UN level is directed particularly at the Convention on Biological Diversity agreement and protocols, and the climate negotiations, often via the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD). Monsanto belongs to the WBCSD that describes itself as “the leading and most compelling sustainable development business voice”.⁶⁷

Monsanto’s climate lobbying can be traced back all the way to the 1998 UN Climate Talks, where it claimed the US could meet up to 30 per cent of its CO2 emission reduction targets by growing its GM crops tolerant to Roundup (the ‘no till’ farming system as herbicides are used instead of ploughing up the soil to kill weeds). Monsanto lobbyist Robert Horsch (later moved to the Gates Foundation) said at that point that corporations had pushed successfully for agricultural ‘carbon sinks’ as a way to reduce greenhouse gases. Unsurprisingly, soil ‘carbon sinks’ became a major bargaining chip for the US

government, which wanted 25 million tons of US farm soils to be recognised as such.⁶⁸ At COP21 in Paris, the WBCSD launched an action plan for so-called Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in partnership with the *Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)* (funded by many countries but also by the Gates Foundation and the Syngenta Foundation). The Climate Smart Agriculture working group is chaired by Monsanto, PepsiCo and Kellogg.⁶⁹ Hashtag used in twitter communication around the launch: #WeMeanIt.

BAYER-MONSANTO MERGER: MONOPOLIES ALLOWED?

The current wave of mergers in agribusiness, notably that of Bayer and Monsanto, is a direct threat to food security, as it is their goal to control as many seed genetic material as possible through patents.

The EU pretends to have a strong anti-monopoly (anti-trust) approach, but the reality is otherwise. Influential business groups like the European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERTI), have pushed the EU competition authorities to allow mergers and further concentration. Indeed, the EU Merger Regulation was meant to facilitate and promote mergers, rather than to hinder them. Tellingly, former Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes said in 2007: “The merger tsunami is a good sign. It shows that [...] European companies are adapting to global competition. These processes [...] must be allowed to run their course without undue political interference.”⁷¹



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