

Training in monitoring the contained use of genetically modified organisms



Taking samples on a potato field in Negovan near Sofia
(Photo: Anke Belter)

Background

In the European Union, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity is implemented through the Directives 2009/41/EC and 2001/18/EC and Regulation (EC) No. 1946/2003. These regulate the contained use of genetically modified micro-organisms (GMO), their release into the environment, and transboundary movements of GMO. They also provide for monitoring tasks which aim to prevent or minimize unintended or illegal releases of GMO into the environment. As an EU member state, Bulgaria is required to transpose and implement this legislation. In Bulgaria, some of these monitoring tasks are the responsibility of the Executive Environment Agency and the National Center of Public Health and Analysis of the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for food monitoring. These institutions would like to carry out monitoring using modern technical equipment and up-to-date methods for monitoring and analysis. They therefore asked for support in training laboratory personnel.

Project

From 5 to 8 June 2012, the Saxony-Anhalt State Environmental Protection Agency conducted a training course on GMO monitoring for staff of the Executive Environment Agency and the National Center of Public Health and Analysis in Bulgaria. Its aim was to provide theoretical and practical training in methods for GMO sampling in laboratories, in greenhouses and on fields and in methods for analyzing these different samples in order to empower the participants to plan, structure and implement their sampling strategies and analyses in a way similar to the methods applied in Germany. The training took place at the Executive Environment Agency's laboratory for biological monitoring in Sofia and at an experimental site for potatoes of the Institute for Research into Ornamental Plants and Horticulture in Negovan. The materials prepared for the training course were made available to the two institutions so that they can use them to train other staff independently.

It was emphasized that inter-agency cooperation is necessary for monitoring GMO.

- Target country: Bulgaria
- Duration: 04/2012 – 06/2012
- Beneficiary: Executive Environment Agency, National Center of Public Health and Analysis
- Implementing organisation: Saxony-Anhalt State Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.sachsen-anhalt.de/index.php?id=lau>
- Project number: 380 01 288