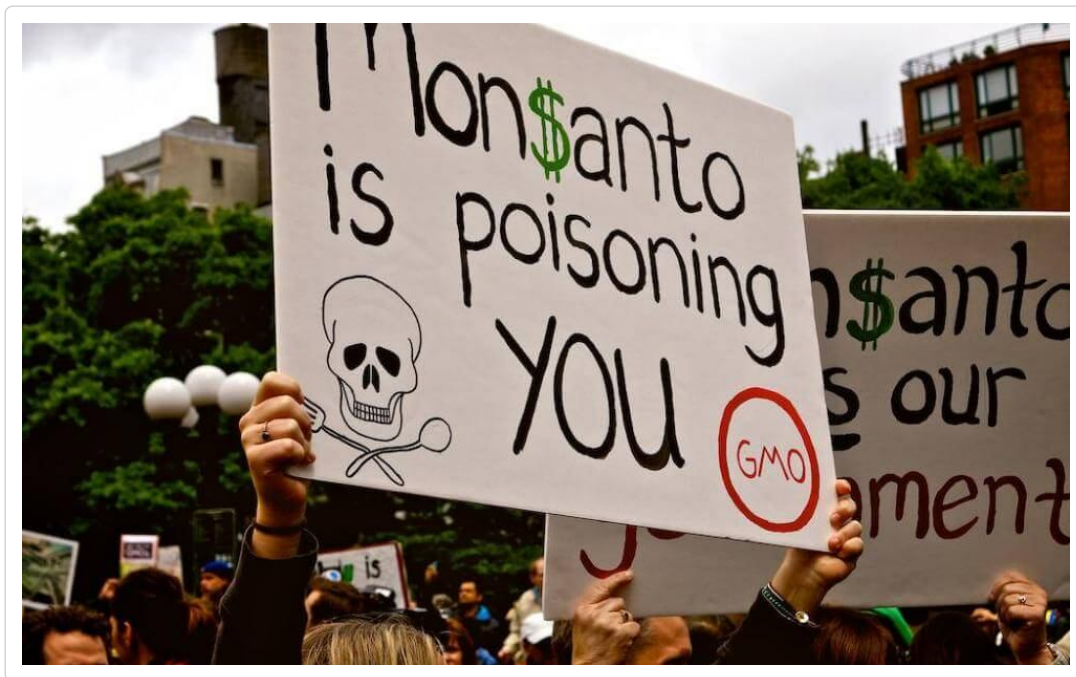


Viewpoint: 'Roundup game plan'—How 'environmental' activists, IARC's Chris Portier plotted attacks on Monsanto-Bayer to get glyphosate banned and cripple ag biotechnology

 geneticliteracyproject.org/2019/09/18/viewpoint-roundup-game-plan-how-environmental-activists-iarcs-chris-



In February 2019, I [David Zaruk] released [an] exposé on corruption inside the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), revealing four egregious scandals in one article. As the research was thorough, the article was quite long. It was also a sub-section of a complex series on how US tort law firms are manipulating scientists and the regulatory research process. I have been advised to rewrite the content outside of the SlimeGate series vocabulary putting them into shorter articles. So the content of that exposé has been broken down into four separate [reports] presented with clearer vocabulary and images:

Part 1: IARC Monographs Produced for US Tort Law Firms

Part 2: IARC Hiding Conflicts of Interest

Part 3: The Glyphosate Gameplan

Part 4: IARC's Ruthless Mercenaries

Part 3 takes the Benzene Backstory and adds the missing pieces to how the campaign to ban

GMOs (having failed in 2014) shifted to a new strategy: the Glyphosate Gameplan. This didn't just happen. A lot of serious minds gave this strategic shift some serious thought. Unethical minds devoid of integrity ... but very smart people.

Four and a half years after IARC published its monograph determining glyphosate a Group 2A (probable) carcinogen, one has to wonder...

Any scientific agency or organization with any sense of commitment to the scientific process, when faced with such overwhelming rejections from the scientific community on a publication, from all of the leading risk assessment agencies and from people on their very own panels would consider retracting such a controversial monograph.

Any scientific agency or organization with any sense of commitment to the scientific process, who has seen how their document has been abused by the pure greed of US tort law firms, by activist NGOs paid by the organic food industry lobby and a group of scientists who had come to IARC with the very intent of enriching themselves would consider retracting such a controversial monograph.

Any scientific agency or organization with any sense of commitment to the scientific process, after receiving a barrage of contradicting facts, studies and evidence would consider retracting such a controversial monograph.

... unless this was part of their Glyphosate Gameplan.

Applying Benzene to Glyphosate?

We saw in the first two sections of this exposé, with the decision to hold a third benzene monograph, how IARC was capable of calling a monograph meeting not on scientific grounds but because of pressure from litigation consultants and to knowingly produce a monograph whose main purpose was to increase the prospects for suing industry in the US courts. We saw that IARC took care of its Good Old Boys network and was capable of lying, changing documents and tolerating conflicts of interest to protect them.

While many would give a big "So what!" about benzene (it's not in my Cheerios and I don't work with it), keep in mind how this serves as a backstory for the atrocious disregard for process and scientific integrity that is endemic inside IARC. Could litigation consultants have put the same pressure on IARC for glyphosate as they did with benzene in order to give tort law firms another lucrative litigation avenue? Did this pressure result in IARC again acting improperly to push the monograph through? Were the tools in place to make glyphosate the next toxic tort tobacco before the Working Group meeting in IARC was even conceived?

Guyton's Radio Silence

The first point to consider was the skittishness of Kate Guyton's message to all American members of the glyphosate monograph imploring them to **not respond** to freedom of information requests. This flew in the face of US codes of conduct for academic accountability and made minced meat out of IARC's pathetic claim of being transparent. What or whom was Guyton trying to protect? They have been hiding this information for four years ... poor Kate must be morally exhausted.

(1) The intent of IARC was to not relinquish control of their records. IARC provided the following information regarding ownership of the records in question: "... it is the position of IARC that all draft documents and materials prepared by the Working Group in advance of or during the in-person Monograph meeting are to be considered draft and deliberative. Working Group members prepare these materials on behalf of IARC, and not as part of their official employment duties for a state or federal institution, and IARC is the sole owner of all such materials. IARC does not encourage participants to retain working drafts of documents after the related Monograph has been published."

IARC is fully
transparent
... until you
ask them to
be

What we learnt from the first two parts of this exposé has me to suspect there are quite a few skeletons these officials would rather not have us discover. Reuters journalist Kate Kelland noticed there was something very wrong with the Guyton smokescreen. As the next section will show, IARC then unleashed four of its Good Old Boys to accuse Ms Kelland of being a ... gulp ... Monsanto shill in order to scare off any other journalists who might dare to question IARC. I wish I were making this up, but it worked. Journalists stopped asking questions.

Adding Glyphosate to Monograph 112 at the Last Minute

Glyphosate was never in the original list of substances for Monograph 112. The IARC meetings webpage was only updated three times in 2014, in April, July and October. The meeting for Monograph 112 was first announced on 16 July 2014 and it was limited to "Some Organophosphate Insecticides". As an aside, it should be noted they sent out a call for experts in the summer with a deadline of two weeks for interested parties to apply. This implies IARC had already selected most of the "Good Old Boys" they wanted in the room.



The image shows a screenshot of the IARC Monographs - Meetings webpage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a search box and a calendar for the year 2014. The calendar shows the months APR, JUL, and OCT. The date 16 is highlighted in yellow, indicating the date of the meeting. Below the calendar, there is a section titled "IARC MONOGRAPHS - MEETINGS" and a link for "Upcoming Meetings".

Upcoming Meetings

Meeting 111: Some Nanomaterials and Some Fibres (30 September - 7 October 2014)

[Preliminary List of Agents](#)
[Call for Data](#) (closing date 3 September 2014)
[Call for Experts](#) (closing date 30 January 2014)
[Request for Observer Status](#) (closing date 3 June 2014)
[WHO Declaration of Interests](#) for this volume

Meeting 112: Some Organophosphate Insecticides (3-10 March 2015)

[Call for Data](#) (closing date 3 February 2015)
[Call for Experts](#) (closing date 30 July 2014)
[Request for Observer Status](#) (closing date 3 November 2014)
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Meeting 112: Some Organophosphate Insecticides and Herbicides: Diazinon, Glyphosate, Malathion, Parathion, and Tetrachlorvinphos (3-10 March 2015)

[Call for Data](#) (closing date 3 February 2015)
[Call for Experts](#) (closing date 30 July 2014)
[Request for Observer Status](#) (closing date 3 November 2014)
[WHO Declaration of Interests](#) for this volume

In July, the meeting was only for organophosphate insecticides. The next update added glyphosate.

The next time the webpage was updated was on 7 October 2014 (less than five months before the meeting). Only then was glyphosate announced as a substance for the panel. Glyphosate is not an organophosphate insecticide and it had absolutely no business being included in this meeting on insecticides (worse, after the call for experts period had closed). Why was glyphosate added so late in the process to a list of unrelated substances? Or should we ask: Which litigation consultant(s) were lobbying IARC to slip the herbicide into the insecticide group on behalf of their US tort law firms lining up a lawsuit strategy?

It is interesting to note that Kate Guyten, in a speech to the European Parliament in 2016, said the decision to work on glyphosate was announced a year before in March 2014. Based on the above evidence and the fact that IARC's external Advisory Committee hadn't recommended glyphosate until later that year, this is a bald-faced lie.

The Portier Glyphosate Timeline

In order to understand how IARC was influenced during this period to include glyphosate into Monograph 112 and the motivation, we need to focus on one influential influencer: Chris Portier. Here is the timeline of events.

2012-13: Portier retires as a regulatory scientist and takes a position with the Environmental

Defense Fund working on their wristband project that can detect exposure to chemicals (including twelve pesticides).

2013: The anti-GMO campaign had some significant losses: Séralini's rat study paper was retracted, US legislation protected farmers growing GM crops, the GMO labeling campaign lost on several ballots.

10.2013-03.2014: Portier takes a six-month visiting scientist position at IARC, working with Kurt Straif in the Monographs program. He writes a paper (using the IARC affiliation) with Bernard Goldstein criticizing the Séralini retraction.

04.2014: A week after finishing his six-month contract with Straif, Portier, as an "independent adviser" chairs IARC's "external" Advisory Group to recommend the priorities for monographs for the next five years (glyphosate is included as a medium priority).

07.2014: IARC calls for experts to participate on Monograph 112 on "Some Organophosphate Insecticides". Glyphosate is not included in the list (it is not an organophosphate insecticide).

05.2014-10.2014: A black hole in Chris's timeline. Enjoying retired life? Helping some friends?

10.2014: IARC adds glyphosate to the Monograph 112 list of substances. The deadline for WG panel member nominations has long passed but it would still be possible for invited specialists or observers to be named.

Late 2014 – Early 2015: Chris is having meetings with the American tort law firm Lundy, Lundy, Soileau and South and signs on for a contract as a litigation consultant for services related to cancers arising from mobile phone use.

20.03.2015: IARC Monograph 112 panel concludes after one week of meetings with the desired result. The Predators have their necessary four words: *Glyphosate is probably carcinogenic*. Chris participates on the panel as an invited specialist .

29.03.2015: Chris signs two contracts as a litigation consultant on glyphosate for Weitz & Luxenberg and Lundy, Lundy, Soileau and South. He starts his stealth campaign to keep the IARC Monograph 112 conclusion on the carcinogenicity of glyphosate relevant.

A few lies spread by Portier regarding this timeline need to be dispelled. In his Johnson testimony, Portier said under oath that he worked at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) after his time as a visiting scientist at IARC (see image). This is false. Portier claimed his EDF work did not involve pesticides and thus was not a conflict of interest. This is false. The EDF wristband project worked with 12 pesticides. He also said in his Daubert deposition he was an invited specialist on Monograph 112 (on glyphosate) because of his conflict of interest with EDF. This is

also false. He informed the Monograph 112 Working Group of his affiliation at the start of the meeting (the initial meeting convocation did not list this NGO affiliation). In any case, IARC would not consider this a conflict of interest since he chaired the IARC Advisory Panel with the same affiliations.

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20 Q. Since retiring, have you stopped doing work in
21 the scientific field?
22 A. No, definitely not.
23 Q. What have you been up to?
24 A. I work -- well, first, I -- right after I
25 retired, I went to the International Agency For Research
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1701

So from the timeline, we can conclude that, like benzene, there was pressure to add the herbicide, glyphosate, to the list of organophosphate insecticides. This was done after the close of panel nominations justifying why Portier attended the working group as an invited specialist. As we saw with

```
1 on Cancer for six months, did a research issue there
2 looking at how to review mechanistic data in evaluating
3 cancer findings. We wrote a paper from that.
4 And then after that, I worked for the
5 Environmental Defense Fund here in the United States.
```

benzene in Part 2 of this exposé, IARC has a very flexible attitude toward conflicts of interest so Portier's involvement with EDF would not have been a factor in any case. Chris was just late to the party.

Most of the preparatory work on IARC monographs are done by IARC staff from around six months prior to the panel meetings. Given how Chris had developed very close relationships with the head of the Monograph Program, Kurt Straif and IARC's glyphosate lead author, Kate Guyton, it would be ridiculous to assume that Chris was not advising his former colleagues and friends at this time. At the same time, Portier was also working for a law firm with a clear interest in the potential for litigation on glyphosate.

We have to remind ourselves of the narrative in 2013-14 in the US. There were intensive NGO campaigns against GMOs, Monsanto and glyphosate. The March against Monsanto events were at their zenith then, the retraction of the Séralini paper sparked outrage (including from Portier and Goldstein) and the campaign to have GMOs labelled on all food products had just failed. There was a clamor to take Roundup to the courts ... but for that you would need to produce evidence other than just public outrage. So when Chris Portier states during his Daubert testimony that he did not talk to lawyers at Lundy, Lundy, Soileau and South about glyphosate a week before he left for the IARC panel to determine, for the first time, that glyphosate is a carcinogen and only by chance signed a lucrative contract as a litigation consultant on glyphosate nine days after the IARC meeting delivered the evidence the law firms needed, I would have to, with a look of astonishment at how stupid Chris thinks we are, conclude emphatically that this is false.

As Goldstein and Infante were the litigation consultants driving IARC to deliver a third monograph on benzene for the sole purpose of facilitating better tort lawsuit payouts, the timeline and events clearly indicate that Chris Portier was involved in a similar scheme to

manufacture a IARC glyphosate conclusion that would unleash the “Hounds of Hell”.

The only thing missing is the smoking email (which brings us back to Guyton's skittish attempt at a cover-up). It should not be overlooked that of the American members of the IARC Monograph 112 panel, a good number of them have since been receiving lucrative fees as expert witnesses and litigation consultants. This includes the chair, Aaron Blair, Christopher Portier, Charles Jameson and Matthew Ross. These canaries certainly won't sing and share their emails.

The Benzene Backstory is useful to understand how IARC operates (and for whom). These things don't just happen – there were people with greed and intent pulling strings to make it happen. This also explains many other seemingly incomprehensible things like:

- why IARC did not retract or reassess their glyphosate monograph
- why people like Kate Guyton have so aggressively fought EFSA
- why Chris Portier traveled the globe to protect the IARC decision
- why Portier was telling so many meaningless lies and deceptions
- why US law firms were lobbying the EU glyphosate reauthorization

Related article: 'We Love GMOs and Vaccines' back, as Facebook lifts block: Neidenbach on home planting of GMOs

Indeed, these things just don't happen. There was a gameplan.

The Glyphosate Gameplan

In 2013-14, the bitter campaign to demand GMO food labeling in the US was coming to an end. The American food and grocery manufacturers association (GMA) had won a battle to prevent mandatory labeling and many had, wrongly, blamed Monsanto for this win. In 2013, the Farmer Assurance Provision was passed (commonly referred to as the “Monsanto Protection Act”) which prevented US federal courts from halting the sale or planting of GM plants. Also in 2013, Elsevier retracted Séralini's rat tumor paper.

[Read Gilles-Éric Séralini: Activist professor and face of anti-GMO industry to learn more]

Activists, campaigners, the organic lobby, regulatory scientists ... a large number of interested parties in the US ... were, to say the least, bitter. It was time to change the gameplan.

1. The Shift to an Adversarial Regulatory Approach

This exposé started with an email from an activist scientist and IARC Good Old Boy, Bernard Goldstein, who wanted IARC to produce a third monograph on benzene to be able to more easily sue industry. In this email he schooled IARC's Monograph Program head, Kurt Straif, on the value of **adversarial regulation**. Goldstein had been developing this concept as an

alternative to the present regulatory policy approach (the risk assessment process) arguing how it is far more effective to change public and industry behavior (simply by 'suing the hell out of companies' in the tort courtrooms). This was the strategy that changed the game with Big Tobacco. No doubt, as Bernie crow, it works much more effectively than the democratic risk management process, but I have referred to these regulatory vigilantes as dangerous, unbridled extortionists (with a lab-coat).

So after losing the campaign to ban GMOs in the lab, on the farms, in the streets and at the ballot box, this motley crew of activist scientists, NGOs, organic lobbyists, health gurus and lawyers took up the Goldstein approach and changed the gameplan: GMOs would be effectively banned by bankrupting the companies making them. For those new to this site, I have an entire series on this adversarial regulatory approach called #SlimeGate.

Lexicon Monger

Adversarial Regulation

A strategy taken by a few disgruntled American regulatory scientists to effect change not through the democratic policy process but via the US tort legal system (see Goldstein, B).

With no legitimate data and no dialogue process, a small group of lawyers, activists and scientists are trying to ban glyphosate by suing Bayer on a massive scale. The company will have to abandon the substance or go bankrupt.

Farmers will lose a vital product, consumers will have to pay more and lawyers will get very rich.

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2. Create a Threat

So they needed to fill the courts with an endless stream of GMO litigation.

There was one problem: GMOs don't kill people ... so it would be hard to fill the courts with supposed victims of an ill-defined seed-breeding process. So the solution was to focus on the main active ingredient in Roundup, glyphosate, that is used alongside herbicide-tolerant GM seeds. If you take glyphosate off the market, the incentive to grow GM soy and maize diminishes, Despite the fact that glyphosate has been off-patent since 2001 with over a dozen manufacturers and a long history of safe use, Monsanto was identified as the slowest zebra in the herd. The game was on.

Then there was another problem: glyphosate has a very low toxicity and is one of the most benign pesticides in use today. No regulatory bodies and very few credible studies have linked glyphosate to human health issues of any kind. It is one reason why glyphosate is the herbicide of the century. As facts have never stopped zealots on a mission before, this problem just needed to be "fixed".

Then somebody mentioned having some friends in IARC.

3. Get IARC to Produce "Evidence"

IARC has become the go-to place for hungry US toxic tort lawyers looking to expand into a new line of plaintiffs. They produce hazard assessments that essentially can conclude anything you want them to conclude (with the exception of caprolactam, having a perfect return on investment for cancer conclusions). The agency is autonomous and yet they can shelter under the WHO umbrella of credibility. Like the law firms, IARC has secrecy built into its process – neither has to worry about demands for transparency. IARC scientists are quite militant so they will rarely change their position or retract their monographs (good for cases that get lost in appeals). Most importantly, IARC maintains a network of Good Old Boys – American scientists who are quite zealous, anti-industry and can be bought – the perfect litigation consultants.

The question is not: why do these law firms go to IARC to tailor toxic tort evidence for new lines of litigation? The question is: Why hasn't anybody noticed until now?

When I read Chris Portier's Daubert deposition, I noticed. And in the near two years since I peeled back our naiveté, what I continue to discover about how science has been corrupted has been quite sickening. If you want to manufacture evidence for the courts (from talcum powder to benzene to putting Monsanto out of business and effectively banning GMOs), then IARC is your one-stop shop for manipulation (and Chris has been front and center throughout this whole corrupt, sordid affair).

The Plaintiff Playbook in 12 Easy Steps

- 1. Find a correlation between a cancer and a cause**
- 2. Recruit an epidemiologist (or an angry statistician)**
- 3. Claim institutional credibility (like IARC)**
- 4. Present the cancer as potentially out of control**
- 5. Engage influencers and celebrities**
- 6. Pay NGOs to run campaigns against targeted company**
- 7. Lobby regulators to impose restrictions or bans**
- 8. Identify a jurisdiction with a "hanging judge"**
- 9. Trawl for good quality victims**
- 10. March victims in front of the cameras**
- 11. Take evidence to an enraged public**
- 12. Quietly take the money to the bank**



#SlimeGate 2/7

#Predatorts 2/4

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4. Amplify Fear and Outrage

Once the predicted IARC decision is in, the entire fear and outrage machinery needs to be launched. Activists, NGOs, organic food lobbyists, scandal-driven media and the law firms themselves energized anti-pesticide chemophobic campaigns. A scientifically illiterate public was terrified by their morning breakfast cereal and ridiculous claims were amplified about glyphosate being responsible for every conceivable health problem.

A cottage industry of pee-testing was born as legions of walking wounded felt they had a story to tell of their own contamination. The glyphosate detox industry flourished as the vulnerable pumped all sorts of chemicals into their bodies to fight the “glyphies”. One of the failed leaders of the GMO labeling campaign, Gary Ruskin, found a more profitable venture by teaming up with Scientologists, the organic lobby and the anti-vaxx movement to undermine trust in the US academe.

And all around them were the lawyers quietly pulling the strings from the shadows, ensuring that fear turned to outrage – the necessary mix to prime any jury into demanding blood. Monsanto's blood translates into private jets. More outrage ... more blood.

This didn't just happen.

5. Protect your “Evidence” against the Evidence

The scientific world was slowly catching up as researchers and scientists finally got to read the full glyphosate monograph (long after the sound and fury of the activist campaigns) and it was anything but impressive. The objective for IARC was not to engage in a scientific debate to test and ensure that their evidence was robust and perhaps correct their monograph if necessary (that is called the scientific method). No, now IARC's role was to protect itself and ensure that the monograph on glyphosate endures the barrage of criticism. (More on this in Part 4 of this exposé.)

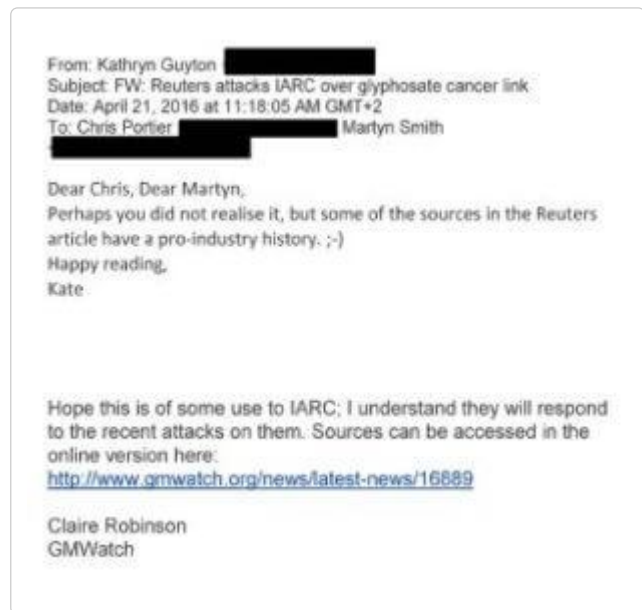
Chris Portier was now traveling the world, briefing governments, writing letters, sitting down with sympathetic journalists and playing the point-man for IARC and their conclusion that glyphosate is probably carcinogenic. He led the attack against EFSA and with the support of Linda Birnbaum's office wrote a letter and gathered signatures to send to the European



BaumHedlund's Michael Baum and Brent Wisner travelling to Canada to get the head of Friends of the Earth Canada to read from their song-sheet.

Commissioner for Health to have him overturn the EFSA rejection of IARC's conclusion. An annoyed EFSA Director, Bernhard Url, referred to this as the Facebook Age of Science. Portier worked non-transparently with one of the most vile activist groups in Brussels, Corporate Europe Observatory, to try to find a mistake in the thousands of pages of ESFA evidence.

Chris wasn't doing all of this because he was a boy-scout. He was heavily invested in this. This didn't just happen.



IARC's battle-hardened Kate Guyton and her Good Old Boys have friends in high places at GMWatch

6. Let the Courts run their Course

Bernie was right. If all you want to do is win, then adversarial regulation is far more effective. The greed of the American tort industry is presently gorging itself on the carcass of the chemical industry and it will only be a matter of time before bankruptcy or a settlement ensues. The lawyers and litigation consultants will get their money (it was never about the plaintiffs so they won't receive much for their services).

Want to follow the latest news and policy debates over agricultural biotechnology and biomedicine? Subscribe to our free newsletter.

Jobs will be lost, innovations abandoned and the public outrage toward industry and technology will harden. Farmers will lose good tools and consumers will pay more for lower quality produce. The environment will suffer as more meadows and forests are ploughed under. But Bernie's strategy will win and the gameplan will be re-set for the next greedy band of zealots.

We are letting this happen. The only way we can stop this is for people to shine a light on these rats and tell the story.

Shame on the Journalists

Outside of Reuters' Kate Kelland, very few journalists had the courage or tenacity to pick up this scandal or scratch below the surface. (NB – The Risk-Monger is not a journalist and this is not his job ... he's just outraged by what these little research recidivists are doing to farmers.) The activities at IARC have not only been corrupt and unethical, they have also been wholly

irresponsible and very few people are telling this story as the horribly conceived consequences are now playing out.

- Because of their treachery, farmers across the world are in the process of losing one of the most important sustainable farming tools in their crop protection toolbox, one that enables them to control weeds and enrich soil via the conservation agriculture techniques of no-till farming with complex cover crops.
- Because of their lies, consumers will be forced to pay more for food and the risk of global food security crises will elevate.
- Because of their greed, one of the world's most innovative chemical / pharmaceutical companies will likely go bankrupt.
- Because of IARC's activist campaign liaisons and interventions, the public has lost trust in regulatory science and technology in general.

The tort law firms, the lawyers, the scientists serving as expert witnesses and litigation consultants, the IARC Good Old Boys, the NGOs, the social media food gurus, the organic food lobby, the shock media and the insurance / litigation finance companies are all doing very well from the Glyphosate Gameplan.

With all of this going on:

- Why hasn't the media woken up to this scam?
- Why can lawyers still stand up in court and claim "The WHO says..." and have no one find them ridiculous?
- Why is the corruption in IARC not an issue?
- Why did I originally release this exposé in February and not one journalist pick it up?

One word: **Monsanto**.

Although the company no longer exists, the word is still used as a ramrod to threaten people, make open discussion difficult and limit dissent or criticism. Activists and feral journalists use this word liberally as they know it is a cheap tool to generate fear and outrage as well as clicks and donations. Disputes are more easily settled via *argumentum ad Monsantem* and academic careers have been ruined by ridiculous associations.

And who has been one of the biggest abusers of this irrational assault on open debate and scientific discussion? IARC!

It is to IARC's activist vitriolic campaigns that this exposé on the corruption of IARC now turns.

David Zaruk has been an EU risk and science communications specialist since 2000, active in EU policy events from REACH and SCALE to the Pesticides Directive, from Science in Society questions to the use of the Precautionary Principle. Follow him on Twitter @zaruk

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