



How Bulgarian citizens
changed GMO policy?



The prospect at the end of 2009

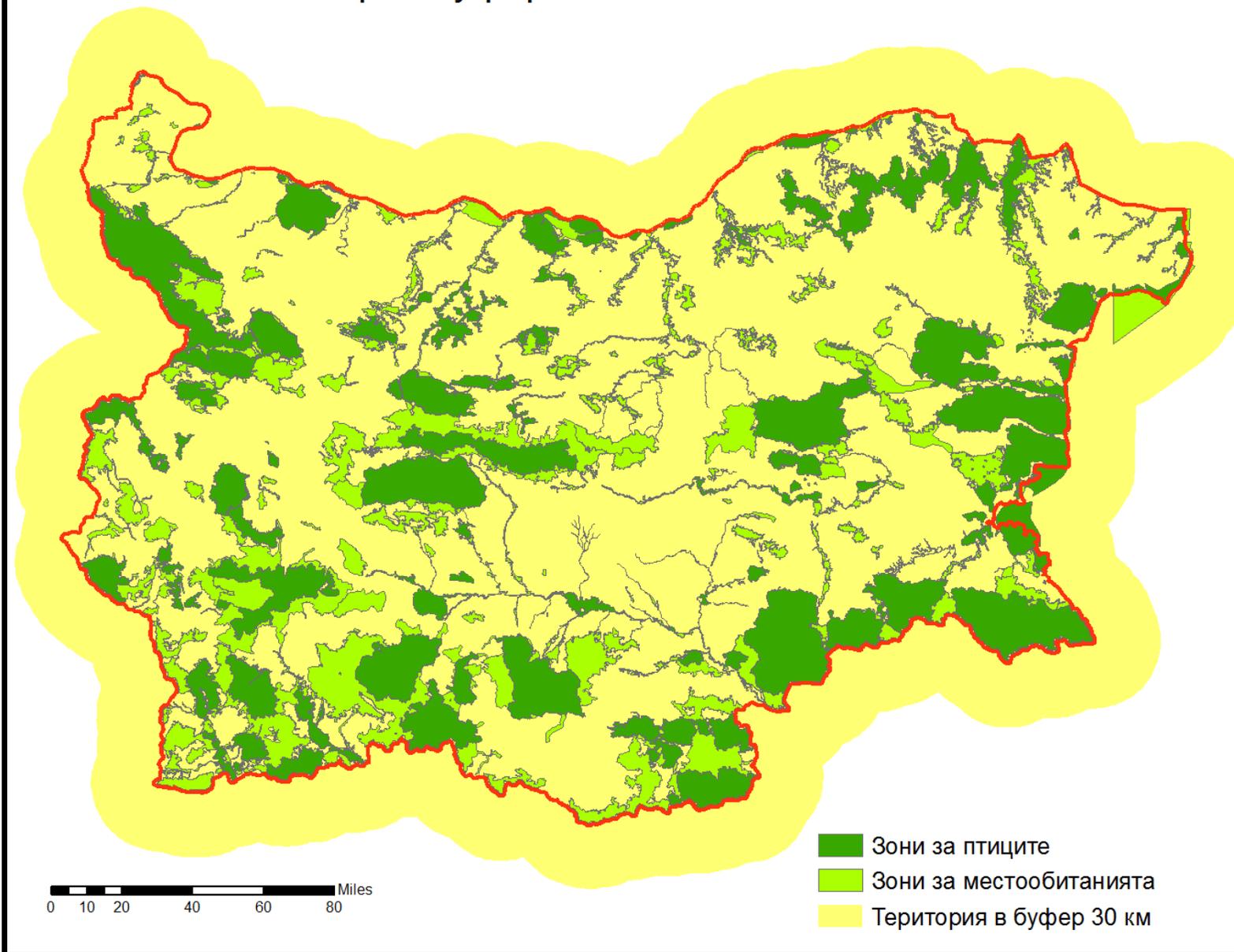
- Very strict GMO Law adopted in 2005
 - Media sleep after GMO campaigns in 2004 - 2005-2006-2007-2008
 - Monsanto representative for Bulgaria advertizing GM maize to farmers and promising change in legislation so to allow for spring GM planting.
 - Ministry of Environment presented to the Parliament amendment of the GMO Act so to allow for GM crops to be cultivated in the country, motivating it with EU official demands.
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State of the art Spring 2010

- 93 % of the population declare against GMO cultivation and use in food.
 - The amended GMO Act keeps the restrictions for coexistence of the old one adding additional restrictions that make GMO cultivation practically impossible in Bulgaria.
 - The Act imposes obligations on the government to apply precautionary bans in case of EU countries' national bans on specific crops.
 - No GMO with antibiotic resistance genes to be allowed for cultivation.
 - Producers started promoting GMO free food.
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30-километров буфер около зоните по НАТУРА 2000



The background is a dark green gradient. In the top-left corner, there is a large, stylized green flower with eight petals. The bottom half of the image is filled with various green plants, including tall grasses, thin stems with leaves, and some small yellow and orange flowers. Several butterflies in yellow, orange, and blue are scattered throughout the scene, appearing to fly or flutter.

How it all happened?

Forerunners

- In September 2009 three NGOs - AGROLINK, Za Zemiata and Environmental Center in Varna - started a campaign on MON810 ban.
- In October 2009 Percy Schmeiser visited Bulgaria: 6 meetings were organised - in Sofia: press conference, meetings with scientists and students in Sofia University, with public and with officials; in Varna: press conference; in Dobrich: meeting with farmers and press conference.
- Seed tests catching GMO cultivation
- Information websites <http://www.mamula.co.cc/>;
<http://www.kompira.co.cc/>
- Petition for MON 810 ban
<http://forthenature.org/petitions/12/>: 5141 signatures

Citizens and media involvement

GOING BIG

- *Petition to government and parliament for bio safety and no GMO - grazhdani.eu: 18096 signatures on-line and more than 3000 on paper.*
 - *SMS campaign to raise awareness and mock corruption associated with GMO promotion.*
 - *“Mothers, babies” and postcards to the prime minister (as well as Mr. Buzek)*
 - *Protests, press conferences, press announcements, interviews, articles, TV shows: 4 months, 10 cities, more than 30 events.*
 - *Non organized, voluntary driven, diverse in participants and approaches.*
 - *Great impact of internet forums, web groups, and facebook.*
 - *Strong media pressure.*
- Story in pictures to follow...*

Short term challenges to achieve now

- National bans on authorized for cultivation crops: MON810, Amflora,?

