

# Former executive director of Greenpeace UK: Morally unacceptable to campaign against GM technology. Bravo.

By ACSH Staff — June 11, 2015



Yet another prominent anti-GMO advocate has come forward

to publicly announce that he has reassessed his opinion on GMOs. Earlier this year, the co-founder of Greenpeace, [Dr. Patrick Moore](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, did likewise, calling the campaign against genetic science baseless. Following shortly thereafter was [Mark Lynas](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, who penned a *New York Times* op-ed titled How I Got Converted to GMO food this past April. And now, Stephen Tindale, who was the executive director of Greenpeace UK until 2005, [spoke out against Greenpeace](#) <sup>[3]</sup> on a BBC *Panorama* programme Monday night. He criticized the group for their opposition to genetically modified (GM) crops Greenpeace is well known as a leading opponent of GMOs.

The overwhelming majority of scientists think that [GM food] is safe. It is in my view unacceptable, morally unacceptable to stand out against these new technologies, Tindale told *Panorama*. And he's correct a survey from the Pew Research Center, in collaboration with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) found that [88 percent of scientists](#) <sup>[4]</sup> believed that genetically modified foods were safe to eat, while only 37 percent of individuals without scientific expertise believed the same. Compare that to 86 percent of scientists who believe childhood vaccinations should be mandatory, and it becomes quite obvious that in the scientific community, GMOs are not controversial.

He continues: I worry for Greenpeace and the other green groups because they could, by taking such a hard line on GM, they could be seen to be putting ideology before the need for humanitarian action. Indeed, GM foods have the potential to be substantially valuable to human welfare including feeding our planet's future [population of 9 billion](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, or providing much needed nutritional value to [vitamin A deficient children](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, just to name a few examples. However, the scare-tactics of anti-science NGOs such as Greenpeace continue to be an obstacle to achieving these goals.

In response to the interview, Greenpeace UK's chief scientist Doug Parr claimed that he does not believe his organization is ideological, but that they instead have a balanced view of the risks and are simply cautious of GM technologies. One example of their (not so) balanced view is the group claiming that there is not an adequate scientific understanding of the impact of GMOs, then destroying experimental GM crop fields that would provide this scientific understanding. (The

aforementioned Mark Lynas admitted to his participation in this GM crop destruction in his *New York Times* op-ed.)

This got ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom to wonder, Gee- I guess I'd like to see what these guys consider to be an unbalanced view. Should be entertaining at the very least.

The reason I've decided to speak out on GM now is because I think it is necessary for people like me who've opposed it to say things have changed, Tindale expressed.

We commend Stephen Tindale for not only changing his mind, but publicly coming forward to express why he is no longer opposed to GMOs. We hope other anti-GMO advocates will do the same.

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**Links**

[1] <http://acsh.org/2015/04/a-big-shoutout-to-dr-patrick-moore-who-dared-to-challenge-greenpeace-on-gmos/>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2015/04/prominent-anti-gmo-activist-changed-his-mind-after-learning-the-science/>

[3] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/agriculture/crops/11661016/Campaigning-against-GM-crops-is-morally-unacceptable-says-former-Greenpeace-chief.html>

[4] <http://acsh.org/2015/01/publics-scientists-views-diverge-widely-important-issues/>

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