Captain Hook Awards

Most Offensive
Winner
United States Patent and Trademark Office
For granting, then rejecting, and ultimately reinstating a US plant patent on the sacred Ayahuasca medicinal plant from the Amazon.
Runner-Up
University of Toledo (Ohio, USA)
For its monopoly patent on Ethiopia's ended, and for demanding royalty payments from the Ethiopian people who wish to use it.

Greediest
Winner
Pod-Net LLC
For bringing lawsuits against farmers and small seed companies, claiming that yellow beans (grown for centuries by Mexican farmers) infringe the company's monopoly patent.

Most Dangerous
Winner
United States Patent and Trademark Office
For setting the precedent of granting sweeping monopoly patents on elements. The nanotechnology industry is positioned to control the building blocks of all living and non-living matter.

Worst International Convention
Winner
World Trade Organization
For failing to review and amend the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS). Despite numerous proposals from South nations, there has been no substantive review of Article 27.3(b) nor has consideration been given to the option of excluding all biological materials from patentability.

Worst Excuse
Winner
Phytopharm
The company's multi-million dollar anti-obesity drug is based on the traditional knowledge of the San people of southern Africa. When asked about sharing the benefits with the San living in southern Africa today, Phytopharm's CEO said, "It's a really fraught problem...especially as the people who discovered the plant have disappeared."

Runner-Up
Monsanto
For Monsanto's most recent attempt to gain a sweeping patent on soybeans (WO/2001/0963).

Worst Corporate Offender
Winner
Monsanto
For seeking to privatize the rice genome and using intellectual property claims to deny full public access to its rice genome data.

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