



GENETIC TECHNOLOGIES AND OUR ENVIRONMENT: DIALOGUES, DEBATES AND DISCUSSIONS

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

Genetic technologies (for example, gene editing, gene drive and gene silencing) are an emerging tool in Aotearoa/New Zealand for environmental purposes, but very little is known about public attitudes towards their use. This project aims to begin a national conversation about the possibilities for and concerns about the use of genetic technologies for conservation and pest control purposes in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

What do people already know about gene technologies? How do they feel about their potential use in our environment for purposes such as pest control and conservation? What are they worried about? What visions do they have for the future of gene technologies for the environment in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

By holding deliberative discussions with a range of targeted publics across the country, this project aims to develop deeper understanding of whether, where and how New Zealanders believe genetic technologies might play a role.

If you come to our discussions, we will break you into small groups. We will present you potential applications of genetic technologies for specific environmental problems (for example, RNAi technologies for varroa mite control), some key information about the problem and potential solutions, and a range of perspectives you could take, including 'no genetic technologies'. You will be asked to discuss the applications and decide on which tools you would prefer to see used (and under what conditions). You will be welcomed to raise questions, problems and additional requirements for responsible use of any technologies. We will audio-record your conversation.

The deliberative discussion workshop is about hearing your perspectives, concerns, beliefs, and feelings about the potential benefits, risks and opportunities for genetic technologies in our environment. You may know and have thought a lot about genetic technologies used for environmental and conservation purposes, or know nothing, or something in between. All voices count and are important.

What Types of Participants are being sought?

We are looking for participants from a range of demographic groups. You may have been asked to be involved in this study due to your membership of a particular organisation – such as your church or community group.

Families are welcome. If you have children under 16 years of age with you, they will not be audio-recorded. We will provide games for them to play within sight of their caregiver/s.

Each event will involve between 5 and 30 people, including participants and researchers.

Refreshments will be provided.

What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to:

- Attend a workshop lasting around 90 minutes, with between 5 and 30 participants. You may already be familiar with other participants.
- You will be put into a small group with other participants and asked to discuss a specific application for a specific purpose. You will be presented with some technical information about that application, and a range of perspectives on its use. You will be asked to come to an agreement in your group about which technologies (including the option of ‘no technologies’) you would most like to see used for this problem. You will be asked to decide on the conditions for its use and issues you feel remain of concern.
- You will be provided with note paper and invited to write down any points where your view differs from that of the group.
- These activities will be audio recorded. No photos or videos will be taken.
- At the end of the workshop you will be asked to fill in a brief survey about your views.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself. You can leave at any time, and any data pertaining to you will be withdrawn if you wish.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

- Raw data to be collected includes audio-recordings, notes taken by participants, and anonymous survey forms.
- There will be an associated website you can choose to engage with. There will be no consequence to you if you choose not to. Contributions to this website may be included in the research data.
- The data will be used to better understand public attitudes to genetic technologies. After transcribing and analysing the data, we will compile a report

that may be used by policy makers to help plan New Zealand's use of these technologies for environmental purposes.

- The identity of your group will be protected by use of a generic descriptor, e.g. workshop 001.
- The raw data will be seen by members of a research team who work at the Universities of Otago and Auckland, who will transcribe and analyse the data. This research is funded by the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge.
- Anonymised data may be used by other groups involved in research into this area, such as Manaaki Whenua and Te Tira Whakamātaki. No personalising data will be provided to third parties, unless permission is specifically granted by research participants.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **at least 5 years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants, such as contact details, audio or video tapes, after they have been transcribed, may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

- No material that could personally identify you will be used in any reports on this study. Results of this research may be published. The data from this project will be publicly archived so that it may be used by other researchers. Third parties, such as Manaaki Whenua and Te Tira Whakamātaki, may have access to anonymised data. There will be no commercial use of the data.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

- You will be given the choice to receive audio-files, transcripts of focus group workshops, and a summary of research findings.

This project involves an open small-group discussion. The general line of discussion includes attitudes towards genetic technologies, gene drive, pest control and conservation. The precise nature of the discussion has not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the discussion develops given the material we provide.

In the event that the line of discussion does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to remove yourself from the conversation and/or project.

Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time during the workshop and without any disadvantage to yourself. Your data will be removed from the project.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

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This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.