

**Hearing on Far North District Council Proposed Plan Change # 18 &  
Whangarei District Council Proposed Plan Change # 131– Genetically  
Modified Organisms (PPC18/PPC131)**

Submitter **CLAIRE BLEAKLEY**, President GE Free NZ,  
On behalf of –  
**GE FREE NEW ZEALAND IN FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT.**  
**AUCKLAND GE FREE COALITION**  
**Jon Carapiet**  
**Charles Drace**  
**Peta Kirkwood**  
**Michael Trott.**

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# GE Free New Zealand

*In Food And Environment Inc.*

PO Box 13402, Wellington, NZ Ph +64- 4 - 477 4744

[www.gefree.org.nz](http://www.gefree.org.nz)

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Hearing on Far North District Council PPC18 and Whangarei District Council PPC 131

Dear Chair and Committee,

We would like to address some of the Ministers points

1. (slide 2) The RMA principles are to
  - To protect the health of the Community.
  - To safeguard the Environment.
  - To avoid, mitigate adverse effects
  - To meet the needs of future generations.
2. (slide 3) The HSNO is set up to monitor and ensure government oversight in relation to the development, field testing and conditional release conditions as clearly stated in the ministers points 12-17. However, when a full release is given HSNO oversight is unable to place any controls and the RMA and common law are the only avenues communities have resort too.
3. (slide 4) In this the ten year plan looks ahead to possible precautions that might lie ahead in the future. One of the main aspects is emerging problems that might have adverse effects on their communities health and economic livelihood, culture, and environment.
4. We would like to highlight some issues that have arisen in the last five years relating to the unknown, unexpected and unforeseen effects on GMOs in New Zealand and overseas.
5. (slide 5) Regarding to the Ministers reference at para: 22 on the level of protection and real risks, ERMA has approved 7 field trials of which the first was on sheep in the Waikato. This field trial was signed off and privately sold within 1 month of the animals being autoclaved. There were no post monitoring protections put in place. The Whakamaru field trial is a contaminated site. The ashes are in the pit under the water, The Whakamaru river flows only 150 metres away. No clean up or studies

have been conducted to on any effects on the soil or water table or river from leaching.

6. (slide 6) The Ruakura GM animal field test site report the horrific problems that the trial has faced. Yet, the information has been difficult to access and if GE Free NZ had not written this report the knowledge would have been forgotten in the archives.
7. (slide 7). Some of the field trials are held in secret sites, like the brassica one. It took two members of public NGO's to raise concern over the serious breach of flowering GE plant as the monitors and scientist responsible for the trial were on holiday. Whilst a challenge on the approval was in Court the trial was already breaching its conditions.
8. (slide 8) This breach was in spite of the assurances the Minister gives on the imposition of appropriate monitoring conditions on approval holders. So it is a little difficult to have unresounding confidence in her assurances that HSNO comprehensively covers and protects in a "*comprehensive and consistent national-level framework applies that is specifically tailored towards protecting the environment and the health and safety of people and communities from the unique adverse effects of GMOs*" (MFEpt. 2).
9. (slide 9) In the last five years mounting evidence of harm is arising from GMO release. 15 years since the first untested, GMO was commercialised.
10. (slide 10,11,12,13) Cumulative, permanent, adverse effects are on animal and human health linked to GMO's and pesticides. Increasingly Weed Resistance, Insect tolerance, pesticide harm are all affecting negatively on farmers crops.
11. (slide 14) In the increasing climate changes it is the RMA councils responsibility to protect its communities land and water. HSNO does not have the expertise to specifically decide for each region when it releases a GMO. It is unfair to talk about "good neighbourliness" when your lifetimes effort is destroyed by an adversity of GM contamination as in Steve Marsh's experience.
12. (slide 15) A recent survey among Organic Farmers in the US was released the findings of contamination, crop rejection, costs on yield from delaying planting and regulatory testing, auditing added to a loss of up to \$50,000. Our members do not believe that is affordable.
12. (slide 16) The Rodale report found Organic systems were
  - nearly three times more profitable than conventional systems.
  - organic wheat netting \$835USD/ac/yr.
  - showed resilience and stability, with higher yields in drought years compared to both GM and conventional farming systems.

13. (slide 17) This mounting evidence of permanent, cumulative adverse effects is mounting each year making the

- Long term risks to flora and fauna unknown
- Financial risks to local bodies unacceptable.
- Financial risks to Landowners unacceptable.
- Environmental effects are unacceptable

14. So the uncertainty and unknown risks are must be dealt with in a precautionary manner. It is pleasing that the council plan is taking a precautionary approach which protects farmers and allows them to carry on farming.

15. We Fully support the precautionary approach to the land use of GMO's in the FNDC PPC 18 and WDC PPC 131 rules, policies and objectives.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa

Claire Bleakley on behalf of

Jon Carapiet, Michael Trott, Peta Kirkwood, Charles Drace.

Ngaire Hart, our expert witness will talk on her concerns over the unknown effects on native bees.