

section 4.1 |

appendix 3

Outcomes of Consultation: Submissions from the Public

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4.1 Analysis of oral and written submissions from Hui

Background

The Commission established a programme of workshops and Regional Hui to:

- provide Maori with access to information about the role and work of the Commission and how to make a submission to it
- provide the Commission with access to the views and opinions of Maori.

The organisation of this consultation programme of workshops and Regional Hui is described in Appendix 1 (see “Maori Consultation programme: the process”). Briefly, 28 workshops and 10 Regional Hui were held throughout the country between 24 October 2000 and 13 March 2001. A National Hui took place on 6–8 April 2001.

The Commission received written and oral submissions during its consultation with Maori. Transcripts of the oral submissions and the written submissions at each hui were placed on the Commission website. The submissions related to genetic modification and the application of tikanga Maori, the Treaty of Waitangi and the rights of Maori as an equal Treaty partner to determine the future of genetic modification in this country.

To illustrate the issues raised by Maori, this section provides a brief outline of each of the 10 Regional Hui and the recommendations arising from the National Hui. It then analyses the main points raised in submissions throughout the country.

The reported responses, whether taken from transcripts or from written submissions, have been lightly edited for grammar and style consistency. Respondents' use of "GM" (genetic modification), "GMOs" (genetically modified organisms) and "GE" (genetic engineering) is retained in the summary of responses.

Outline of Regional Hui

The first of the 10 Regional Hui took place in Wanganui on 4 November 2000, the last in Auckland on 10 March 2001. The complete schedule is published in Appendix 1 (see "Operational detail: Maori Consultation programme: Schedule of workshops and hui").

Wanganui Regional Hui

The Wanganui Regional Hui was held on 4 November 2000 at Te Ao Hou Marae, Wanganui. The Chair was Rangipo Metekingi. Around 50 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Palmerston North on 24 October, Wanganui on 25 October, and New Plymouth on 26 October.

Maori organisations involved in arranging the workshops and Regional Hui included Te Runanganui o Rangitane, Muaupoko Tribal Authority, Whanganui River Maori Trust Board, Te Ao Hou Marae Trustees, and Te Puni Kokiri offices in New Plymouth and Wanganui.

There were 21 oral submissions at the Wanganui Regional Hui. There were no written submissions.

Submissions expressed concerns about:

- whakapapa and the mixing of genes
- control of the technology and the power of multinational companies
- effective labelling of genetically modified food.

Other themes in oral submissions included:

- Legislation is required to ensure Maori decision-making rights in respect of development of genetic modification in New Zealand.
- There is a need for effective control and containment of genetic modification experiments.

- For Maori, genetic modification is likely to be another form of colonialism.
- Maori had no say on the setting up of the Commission itself and questioned the Commission's commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi.
- There is not enough information and knowledge available to make informed decisions on genetic modification.
- An open mind on genetic modification is needed.

Whangarei Regional Hui

The second Regional Hui was held on 17 November 2000 at Pehiaweri Marae, Whangarei. Sam Kake and Pihopa Kingi chaired the hui. Approximately 11 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Kaikohe on 27 October and Whangarei on 28 October.

Organisations primarily involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Runanga a Iwi O Ngapuhi, Ngitiwai Trust Board, Pehiaweri Marae and Te Puni Kokiri Whangarei.

There were six oral submissions and no written submissions at the hui. Submissions expressed concerns about:

- Maori are not given sufficient information about genetic modification to make informed decisions. More discussion is required.
- Kaumatua and kuia need to be approached for information they have.
- New Zealand is not ready for genetic modification. Cheap, genetically modified products will be dumped here on lower income people.
- Who will benefit from genetic modification and who will control it?
- Genetic modification might be useful. It is here already, so let us consider it.
- Fears were expressed about cross-pollination from genetically modified crops.
- Concerns were expressed about effective food labelling.

Rotorua Regional Hui

The Rotorua Regional Hui took place on 2 December 2000 at Tamatekapua Marae, Rotorua. The Chair was Pihopa Kingi. Approximately 25 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Tauranga on 20 November, Rotorua on 21 November, Whakatane on 22 November and Taupo on 23 November.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Taru White Consultancy, Te Puni Kokiri Rotorua and Tamatekapua Marae.

There were six oral submissions at the Rotorua Hui and two written submissions.

The following is a summary of themes presented in oral submissions:

- Concerns were expressed over chemicals and effects of genetic modification on trees, plants and seed (“better without genetic modification”).
- Idle Maori land could be used to grow “GE-free” crops.
- Concerns were expressed about Treaty of Waitangi obligations on the Crown. More information and consultation is required by Maori. Maori need to be involved in decision-making.
- Concerns were raised about control over genetic modification experiments. Stop or slow down genetic modification experiments.
- There should be a moratorium on genetic modification experiments in New Zealand.
- There should be no mixing of human and animal genes.
- Concerns were expressed about use and patenting of Maori genetic material and intellectual property rights.
- Man is looking to control too much. Look what happened to Maui.
- Maori spiritual beliefs are just as valid as western spiritual beliefs.

The written submissions outlined the following themes:

- In health there can be benefits to Maori from understanding genes.
- Maori need to be firmly in a decision-making role regarding the development of genetic modification in New Zealand.
- There should be a moratorium on the patenting of genes from Maori and rongoa material.
- Don’t tamper with whakapapa or mix human and animal genes.
- There should be no genetically modified crops allowed unless there is zero risk of cross-pollination of indigenous species.

Wellington Regional Hui

The Wellington Regional Hui was held on 15 December 2000 at Waiwhetu Marae, Lower Hutt. Neville Baker was Chair. Approximately 40 people attended. Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Porirua on 27 November, Wellington on 28 November and Upper Hutt on 7 December.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Takapuwhia Marae, Tapu te Ranga Marae, Omaka Marae, Waiwhetu Marae and Te Puni Kokiri Lower Hutt.

There were 10 oral submissions and two written submissions at the hui.

Oral submissions expressed concerns about:

- the interchange of genes across species
- monitoring and regulation of genetic modification
- some lack of knowledge and time to respond
- kaitiaki responsibilities, and general ignorance of what is “out there”
- global warming, biosecurity, interference with God’s work, and lack of respect for Maori advisers to the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA).

Other themes in oral submissions included:

- We need to look at who we are, where we are from, before looking to the future.
- Intellectual property right is an issue. The Crown is alleged to own “everything”.
- Maraeroa marae voted overwhelmingly against genetic modification based on “gut feeling”.
- For performing arts, there is a concern about interference with the attributes of nature, eg with harakeke needed for Maori dance.
- There is a need for young people to be encouraged to take an interest in genetic modification and what is happening.
- There is a need to recognise the Treaty: no mixing of human and animal genes.

In addition to oral submissions, written submissions were handed to the Commission:

- One submitter was concerned with protection of biodiversity, and eliminating uncontrolled gene transfers. The submission sought containment of genetic engineering trials, that kaitiakitanga should be honoured by the Crown, and stated that Crown policies and laws on genetic modification were being heard by the Waitangi Tribunal.
- Orongomai Marae (a multicultural marae) recommended that the Treaty of Waitangi be the strategic option used now and in the future to address genetic modification issues, and the introduction of legislation to monitor genetic modification imports and require labelling. Legislation was also recommended to ban genetic modification of food.

Blenheim Regional Hui

A Regional Hui was held on 27 January 2001 at Omaka Marae, Blenheim. The Chair was Hoani Cowan. Around 10 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Picton on 18 January and Nelson on 19 January.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Waikawa Marae, Whakatu Marae, Omaka Marae and Te Puni Kokiri Blenheim.

There were two oral submissions and no written submissions.

The following is a summary of themes expressed in oral submissions:

- tampering with genes
- intellectual property rights and the rights of Maori (noting that many Maori resources have been stolen and the same might happen in relation to genetic modification)
- interfering in whakapapa and using medicines with different genes
- ‘test tube’ products which do not embody spirituality.

Hastings Regional Hui

The Hastings Regional Hui was held on 10 February 2001 at Omahu Marae, Hastings. Joe Te Rito was Chair. Approximately 25 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Napier on 23 January and Dannevirke on 24 January.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Whanganui-a-orotu, Rangitane Tamaki-nui-a-rua, Omahu Marae and Te Puni Kokiri Hastings.

There were six oral submissions and two written submissions at the hui.

Themes outlined in oral submissions included:

- A total moratorium on genetic modification research and trials in New Zealand.
- While such a moratorium is in place, Maori should be involved in a formalised, full, educative and ethical debate about genetic modification.
- No transfer of genes between species.
- We have no faith in the Crown to protect cultural or intellectual property rights of Maori.
- Checks and balances are needed.
- Genetic modification could be good but we need safeguards and controls.

Written submissions contained the following themes:

- We have little faith in how Maori concerns will be acted on.
- We have concerns about the Treaty of Waitangi.
- The Maori view is portrayed as unscientific compared with the ‘western’ view.
- Maori intellectual tradition has been ignored.

Gisborne Regional Hui

A Regional Hui was held on 17 February 2001 at Te Poho-o-Rawiri Marae, Gisborne. The Chair was Toko te Kani. Around 16 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Ruatoria on 1 February and Gisborne on 2 February.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Runanga o Ngati Porou, Te Poho o Rawiri Marae and Te Puni Kokiri offices in Gisborne and Ruatoria.

There were six oral submissions and one written submission.

The following is a summary of themes outlined in oral submissions:

- Concerns were expressed about damage to the environment.
- Rights of indigenous people should be protected.
- Genetically modified foods must be labelled.
- Say no to genetic modification except perhaps for medicine.
- Genetic modification will be driven by the dollar rather than by welfare.
- Concerns were expressed about effective control of genetic modification, genetic modification processes and experiments.
- More information is required by Maori for effective consultation.

The written submission contained the following themes:

- The Crown needs to consult properly with Maori on genetic modification. There has been not enough information or time.
- The Crown needs to pay more attention to tikanga Maori and the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Genetic modification not opposed in general, but genetic modification technology out of control is intolerable and dangerous.
- Proper controls need to be put in place to monitor genetic modification.

Christchurch Regional Hui

The Christchurch Regional Hui was held on 24 February 2001 at Te Waipounamu House, Christchurch. Paul Hiroti was Chair. Approximately 20 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Christchurch on 12 February and Hokitika on 19 February.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu and Te Puni Kokiri offices in Christchurch and Hokitika.

There were 11 oral submissions and no written submissions at the hui.

Submissions expressed concerns about:

- intellectual property and Treaty rights of Maori
- genetic modification experiments being conducted without public's knowledge
- mixing genes and whakapapa
- patenting genes
- scientists playing God
- the Treaty of Waitangi.

Other themes in oral submissions included:

- Scientists cannot handle genetic modification issues alone. They are not able to enter the Maori world, nor do they want to.
- Legislation is needed to ensure Maori participation in genetic modification decision-making in New Zealand.
- More information is required for proper consultation.
- Genetic modification cannot be classed in black and white terms. We want health benefits and should have access to that knowledge.
- Slow genetic modification down and get the proper and effective controls into place first.

Dunedin Regional Hui

The final South Island Regional Hui was held on 6 March 2001 at Otakou Marae, Dunedin. The Chair was Edward Ellison. Around 12 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Invercargill on 4 December 2000 and Dunedin on 5 December 2000.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, Nga Hau e Wha Marae, Otakou Marae and Te Puni Kokiri Dunedin.

There were six oral submissions and no written submissions.

The following is a summary of themes presented in oral submissions:

- Genetic modification is fine as long as it is by normal evolution and not human interference.
- Concerns were expressed about whakapapa and the mixing of genes between species.
- Genetic modification is not necessarily a bad thing, but we need to be very careful about potential damage. Controls need to be in place.
- Maori have been an innovative people but under the control of their own tikanga and kawa. The present legislation and controls are inadequate.
- Treaty of Waitangi obligations should be written into genetic modification legislation.
- Precautionary principles need to apply.

Auckland Regional Hui

The Auckland Regional Hui was held on 10 March 2001 at Orakei Marae, Auckland. Danny Tumahai was Chair. Approximately 50 people attended.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Papatoetoe on 26 February, Henderson on 27 February and Northcote on 28 February.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Manukau Urban Maori Authority, Waipareira Trust Office, Orakei Marae and Awataha Marae.

There were 12 oral submissions and two written submissions at the hui.

The following is a summary of themes presented in oral submissions:

- Take time to consider all the implications of genetic modification properly.
- Social funds (health and nutrition) should be used to clean up the environment and to provide better health care and nutrition, not diverted to genetic modification.
- It is faulty to think that genetic modification will provide an effective fix to all our problems.
- Multinationals are looking at genes as a new commercial commodity and indigenous people will be exploited for their genes.
- Concerns were expressed about lack of information for Maori and protection of intellectual property rights.
- Concerns were expressed about effective controls over genetic modification experiments and commercialism.

- Opposition was expressed to mixing of genes between human and others.
- Consultation like this is inadequate without Maori having all the facts to make an informed decision.
- Keep an open mind. Gene therapy could be useful and we should have access to information and knowledge on the medical benefits of genetic modification.
- It is important that Maori be in a position to use the tools of genetic modification and to help manage it in New Zealand.
- Maori rights under the Treaty to equal authority must be observed fully.

The written submissions included the following views:

- Can we trust the geneticists and their technology?
- The Treaty of Waitangi is the best means of protecting Maori heritage, culture, flora and fauna, and full ratification of the Treaty is required.

Outline of National Hui

A National Hui was held at Turangawaewae Marae, Ngaruawahia on 6–8 April 2001. All the Commissioners were present and at least two representatives from each of the previous 10 Regional Hui. Taki Turner, Chris Webster and Kingi Porima chaired the three-day hui.

Attendance at the event varied over the three days: approximately 50 people took part on Friday 6 April, 120 on Saturday and 65 on Sunday.

The hui also served as a Regional Hui for the Waikato, King Country and Counties area.

Pre-Regional Hui workshops were held in Pukekohe on 12 March, Hamilton on 12 March and Te Kuiti on 13 March.

Organisations involved in arranging workshops and Regional Hui included Huakina Development Trust, Maniapoto Maori Trust Board, Te Puni Kokiri Hamilton and Turangawaewae Marae Committee.

There were 16 oral submissions and three written submissions. The hui also endorsed 16 recommendations on genetic modification which it presented to the Commission.

Oral submissions referred to:

- whakapapa and the marketing of Maori intellectual property
- the breaking down of traditional relationships in the natural world
- western constructs of patents hiding behind the ethic of stewardship

- controls over genetic modification experiments and field tests
- labelling genetically modified foods properly
- health risks.

Other themes in oral submissions included:

- Genetic modification is a direct offence to Te Ao Maori, is a breach of Maori rights and perpetuates colonialism.
- Maori will be further disadvantaged and alienated from their taonga.
- Maori own the responsibility to protect the legacy of their own future generations and need to be able to give informed consent to genetic modification.
- Genetic modification development without Maori consent is a breach of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Genetic modification agenda will be undermined by multinationals. Concerns were expressed about Government's ability to control outcomes.
- There should be a moratorium on genetic modification developments now and until such time as the Maori Treaty partner agrees.
- There is a lack of information and time to make informed decisions on genetic modification.
- Many concerns were expressed over Maori rights under the Treaty being ignored. Who will benefit and who will control? Who knows what is truly happening?
- Scientists and Crown Research Institutes should be held responsible and accountable for the results of their work.
- Flora, fauna and rongoa need to be protected.

Written submissions expressed similar concerns to those in oral submissions. Additional issues included:

- Public money is being used on genetic modification without any clear understanding of the risks and whether or not it is in the public interest. The Commission has a duty to comment on this.
- Maori views are sought when convenient and scoffed at if 'unsuitable' or considered not scientific.
- Legislation needs to be passed to ensure and guarantee Maori a full decision-making role covering all aspects of genetic modification development in New Zealand.
- Genetic modification interferes with the integrity of species and the mauri of the affected species.

Recommendations on genetic modification from the hui

On Sunday 8 April the National Hui attendees considered and passed a resolution of support for 16 recommendations on genetic modification:

1. That the Crown honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
2. That a process for implementing constitutional change is negotiated between Maori and the Crown which includes a revision of all legislation inconsistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi including the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.
3. That following such a process, any constitutional change implemented reflects a basis in tikanga Maori and acknowledges the following constitutional documents as the foundation for such process:

Declaration of Independence

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights

Mataatua Declaration

An Aotearoa (New Zealand) Constitution

4. That the Crown fund a parallel process which seeks Maori knowledge and opinions on genetic modification (GM) sourced from kaupapa Maori processes and contexts immediately.
5. That a moratorium be placed upon all activities related to GM and GMOs immediately.
6. That we outlaw the patenting of any life forms.
7. That an inventory on GMOs and GM activity in Aotearoa be completed by Maori and the Crown. Such an inventory must source all GMOs and GM research, outputs and activities to date.
8. That Maori in negotiation with the Crown commence immediately an environmental, spiritual and cultural GMO impact assessment, followed by a cultural, spiritual and environmental clean up.
9. That the Crown stops free-trade negotiations and stops biotechnology multinationals from entering Aotearoa to conduct GM experiments.
10. That Maori in negotiation with the Crown develop separate standards from the current ANZFA and other food standards that label GM foods.
11. That Maori in negotiation with the Crown label all GM foods.
12. That Maori in negotiation with the Crown halt the import of GM foods for the future.

13. That the Crown fund sustainable organic agricultural practices and implement processes that will ensure that Aotearoa is an organic nation by 2020.
14. We declare that Aotearoa should be an independent, nuclear- and GE-free nation.
15. That the Royal Commission include the resolutions from the National Maori Hui held 6–8 April 2001 in their final report, and to the New Zealand Government.
16. National Hui held at Turangawaewae acknowledge and support the recommendations presented by Nga Wahine Tiaki o te Ao and other whanau, hapu, iwi, and Maori submissions that were received and delivered.

Analysis of main points in oral and written submissions

The submissions, both oral and written, received through the Maori Consultation programme of workshops and hui were predominantly opposed to genetic modification. However, although a large part of that negativity stemmed from the submitters' views about the mixing of genes between species, a major concern also was the abrogation of Maori rights under the Treaty of Waitangi, a lack of information and time to make informed decisions on genetic modification, and concerns about who will control genetic modification in New Zealand and who will benefit from it.

The following summary of the main findings from submissions made through the hui programme is grouped into the broad topic areas of:

- tikanga Maori
- Treaty of Waitangi
- controls and benefits
- information and time.

Tikanga Maori

Upsetting whakapapa, mana, mauri and wairua by the mixing of genes between humans and other species was roundly condemned at every hui.

At the first regional hui at Wanganui, James Okeroa Broughton, a Muaupoko Kaumatua, said:

Although we are all related and linked to each other through Rangi and Papa, all species have their own mauri which must stay with their own species. In our culture, we, as

human beings, are seen as in no way superior to other living things. We make use of other species in the natural world and they make use of us when we die. But we are not superior to them. ... the mixing of the life force of one species with another by human beings is not tika and will adversely affect all of us.

At the final hui at Turangawaewae in April, a representative of Totara Nations, a rangatahi group, said:

When the balanced cycle is interfered with through genetic manipulation, whether it be intentional or accidental, [it] will ultimately cause an imbalance. The hua, the product of this interference, is uncertain; [it is] undeniable the kawai whakaheke will be broken and the link to our tradition and traditional relationships with the natural world will be severed.

Mahara Okeroa, a Member of Parliament, also said at the Wellington Regional Hui:

My submission is that, while I understand and appreciate the medical benefit that comes from this, I suggest very strongly to the Commission that genetic modification, where we look at the genes' ira tangata and use those interchangeably for whatever scientific anticipated benefit it might have for us, raises very strong issues for me personally ... [the] whakapapa to all of those other things that exist ... why should those things be mixed with regard to a scientific advancement?

There were many similar expressions of concern at all the Regional Hui without exception, reinforcing the view that for Maori the concepts of whakapapa, mauri and wairua in respect of genetic modification are very important.

Lack of western knowledge and respect for tikanga Maori and Maori intellectual tradition was raised too, with the suggestion that both were confined to a hazy, cultural, spiritual, 'feel-good' area. Moana Jackson, a lawyer, commented at the Hastings Regional Hui:

There is little recognition that the Maori world is anything other than a cultural object, noted for its spirituality and its music. In this view, everything from our notions of political authority to an understanding of genetics is marginalised as cultural, rather than scientific or intellectual ... Because the Maori consideration of many issues is reduced to a cultural phenomenon, the efficacy of the Maori intellectual tradition is itself denied. In its place, Maori are asked to offer a mere 'perspective', which easily leads to rejection on the grounds of unreasoned, if interesting, spirituality or minimalisation as something that may be noted, but ignored if more compelling scientific or economic reasons can be discovered.

Many submitters made the point that the Commission and the Government must accept that there is a difference in approach and analysis inherent in the Maori intellectual tradition and in tikanga Maori.

Treaty of Waitangi

Concerns about Government going ahead with genetic modification development in New Zealand without proper consultation with and agreement of the Maori Treaty partner were expressed many times at all the hui.

Sir John Turei in his submission at the Auckland Regional Hui encapsulated the views expressed at all of the hui, about Government's need to fully honour and ratify the Treaty. Sir John pointed out that consultation, power-sharing and shared decision-making was a vital part of the relationship between Maori and the Crown, and stated that “the Treaty is the best means by which we can protect our unique heritage, our cultures, our people, flora and fauna, in the future from the ravages of misguided technology”.

The first two of the 16 recommendations endorsed at the National Hui at Turangawaewae dealt with the Treaty: “that the Crown honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi” and “that a process for implementing constitutional change is negotiated between Maori and the Crown which includes a revision of all legislation inconsistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996”.

The need to ensure that Maori rights are not ignored or abrogated by the Crown and multinational companies in the development of genetic modification was also voiced many times. Demands were made to ensure legislation guaranteeing Maori a decision-making role in genetic modification development:

- “Legislation must be passed to ensure and guarantee to Nga Hapu Maori o Aoteroa, Te Iwi Maori, a legislated Treaty of Waitangi, tangata whenua, rangatiratanga right to a full decision-making Treaty Partner role covering all aspects of the development of genetic engineering and genetic modification in Aotearoa-New Zealand” (a resolution proposed by Te Iwi o Muaupoko representative at the National Hui).
- “I seek the following decisions from the genetic modification Commission ... [that] tangata whenua [be] involved in the decision-making, as the Treaty of Waitangi has been breached in so far as our future generations' wellbeing, our birthright to that of the whenua and the respect and care given by our people” (Angela Harmer at the National Hui).
- It is further submitted that Maori be given equal representation with non-Maori within all legislative decision-making structures involving the natural and spiritual environment on the basis of both their particular and special role as guardians of the natural world and as tangata whenua or first peoples of the land” (written submission by Makere Stewart-Harawira at the National Hui).

At the Wellington hui, Fred Allan requested the Commission caution the Crown “that future Maori claims to the Crown for gross negligence will occur unless Maori concerns about genetic modifications are recognised and processed”.

Similar concerns were expressed about protecting Maori intellectual property rights, particularly in respect of indigenous plants and medicines and the patenting of the genes of Maori people and exploiting them. Jodie Toroa, at the Gisborne hui, commented: “The other thing that came through strong with our Kaumatua is that they believe that this is a global activity and that it is driven by an economic market dollar rather than the welfare and sanctity of our environment and our people”.

Control and benefits

There were many expressions of concern about who would control and monitor genetic modification in New Zealand and how this would be done in terms of experiments and research and control of access to expected benefits. Views were expressed that scientists could not be left to oversee genetic modification experiments and that all genetic modification experiments must be fully authorised and monitored independently.

Chris Webster at the Rotorua hui, said: “With this GM, we have the potential for opening up a whole bunch of problems, fast, and we can not guarantee that we are actually going to be able to protect our public.”

Sister Makareta, at the Wanganui hui, said:

I am here to protect ourselves in the face of an advancing technology. To protect ourselves against efforts of a new form of colonialism, a new form of colonisation which has been hidden for quite a while.

And at the Hastings Regional Hui, Mereana Pitman stated:

Our whanau and hapu believe that the past record of the Crown in adequately ensuring these taonga be protected has been negligible and doubt very much that the current authorities, the Crown now, will be able to balance its need and desire for economic investment and the protection of these cultural and intellectual properties of whanau, hapu and iwi. So I suppose in essence what I am saying is that we have little faith considering that track record of the Crown ... that they will adequately protect these taonga of ours.

Although there were many negative comments about access to the perceived benefits of genetic modification by Maori people, including “cheap genetically modified products will be dumped on lower income people”, there were some who pointed out benefits they or their family had experienced or wanted.

Maria Tini, at the Rotorua hui, gave an example of how her whanau had benefited from research work carried out by Otago University to study familial gastric cancer prevalent in her whanau.

Cath Brown said: “I don’t believe that genetic modification research can be categorised as all black or all white and that is my personal opinion and from discussion with my whanau and my wider whanau, my hapu at Taumutu. I want the health benefits that can accrue from such research.”

As referred to previously, there were many expressions of concern about the control of genetic modification in New Zealand and the access to benefits. These included Government’s ability to control genetic modification development in New Zealand, the power of multinational companies, food labelling, field trials of crops, the need for a moratorium, patenting of genes, use of public money on genetic modification experiments, intellectual property rights and so on. At most of the hui, however, there were some people who expressed the view that, although they too were concerned about the control and safeguards on genetic modification development in New Zealand and the Treaty and protection of Maori rights, they also urged Maori to keep an open mind on genetic modification, particularly in the areas of medicine.

Dr David Jansen said at the Auckland hui:

Maori are very keen to adopt new technologies ... Many of our Maori families are grappling with issues about genetic treatment, about transplants, about blood transfusions ... And I support our people working through those issues and it needs to be a process, which is supportive of bringing our tikanga. ... I want them to have access to that knowledge and that information, within the concept of being Maori, within our worldview, our tikanga and our traditions and our values ... But I do think that it is important as Maori doctors we bring to this korero and advocate on behalf of our Maori patients who potentially will gain great benefit from genetic engineering or genetic modification.

Information and Time

At all the hui criticisms were voiced about a perceived lack of information and time for Maori to make fully informed decisions and submissions on genetic modification.

Chris Webster at the Rotorua hui said that there had been “very little discussion, very little knowledge generated within our community, including my own industry [public health] ... The conversation needs to happen so that we are all

making informed input to this process.”

Two of the 16 recommendations endorsed at the National Hui at Turangawaewae were: “That the Crown fund a parallel process which seeks Maori knowledge and opinions on genetic modification (GM) sourced from kaupapa Maori process and contexts immediately” and “That Maori in negotiation with the Crown commence immediately an environmental, spiritual and cultural GM impact assessment, followed by a cultural, spiritual and environmental clean up”.