

Official Information Act Request

Requester's details

Date: 19 March 2024

Name: Claire Bleakley

Organisation: GE Free NZ

Email: claire@gefree.org.nz

Reference number: ENQ-47619-Y8X5H3

Tēnā koe Claire

Thank you for your request received on 4 March 2024:

“ Please can you provide –

1. All the species of wasps and Latin names, that the EPA/ERMA has approved to conduct gene drive research?
2. Please may we have the EPA/ERMA application numbers of all the novel gene drive wasp approvals?
3. What year was the first approval for gene drives made by the EPA/ERMA?
4. What are the application numbers?
5. Why was approval for gene drives given before global consensus protocols have been decided on?
6. May we have the expert external and internal correspondence that was sought on the gene drive approvals?
7. Were Māori consulted?
8. May we have the documents on the consideration of effects on native wasps?
9. What other insects have EPA/ERMA approval for gene drive experiments?
10. All documents relating to gene drive approvals and application numbers on all insects?
11. The six monthly MPI compliance and monitoring reports and University of Otago internal inspection reports required under the controls set.
12. Any reported breaches of containment?”

The EPA (including its predecessors) has neither received nor approved any application for gene drive research in wasps or any other insect in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, the EPA has no record of any species of wasps or any other insect approved for gene drive research, including their Latin names.

We therefore cannot any provide information in response to the questions you have asked regarding any such application, because no applications have been made. Therefore, your request is refused in full under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), because the information requested does not exist.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602, or by email at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via ministerials@epa.govt.nz

We may publish your request and our response on our website, www.epa.govt.nz. We make OIA responses available so others can read more about the work we do and the questions we are asked. Any information that might identify you will be removed to protect your privacy.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Hill".

Dr Christopher Hill
General Manager, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms