

# Official Information Act Request

## Requester's details

**Date:** 5 June 2025

**Name:** Jon Muller (GE Free NZ)

**Email:** jonm123@me.com

**Reference number:** ENQ-49404-D4J2B3

Tēnā koe Jon

I refer to your request received on 23 May 2025. We respond to each question in turn below.

**I note that an experimental trial of gene edited *Pinus radiata* has been planted in the field trial site at Scion.**

**• Please can you advise the approval code for these trees?**

Approval number: GMF100001. It was approved in December 2010. You can find the application overview on our website: [HSNO application register | EPA](#)

Application code: ERMA200479

**• Where was it notified for public comment?**

The application, ERMA200479, was publicly notified on 25 August 2010, calling for submissions until 6 October 2010. The application was advertised in the NZ Herald, Dominion Post, Christchurch Press, Otago Daily Times and the Rotorua Daily Post.

The Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) predecessor, the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) held a list of interested parties, called the "GM List." This list contains information of the interested parties who would like to receive notification via email or letter when call for submissions open.

**• Will they need annual reporting as to their production, health condition?**

Approvals for field tests/outdoor developments currently taking place in New Zealand require the applicant to provide us with an annual report. The annual reports can be found on the application webpage, under application documents: [Application ERMA200479](#)

**• Will they be allowed to produce cones or**

**• Will they be removed to the glasshouse when any reproductive structure is formed?**

Appendix 2 on pages 24 -26 of the [Environmental Risk Management Authority Decision: ERMA200479](#) sets out the controls required for this approval. Controls 10 and 11 speak to inspecting, monitoring and disposal of reproductive structures:

**10. Inspection and monitoring:**

The approval holder must ensure that:

- (a) they remove from the approved organisms any developing male or female reproductive structures before they mature;

- (b) each approved organism planted in the field test site must be inspected for the development of reproductive structures at intervals of no more than four weeks, except between 1 March and 30 June when the inspections must be at intervals of no more than 14 days;
- (c) the reproductive structure from the approved organism must be removed as soon as practicable after detection and within 24 hours

**11. Killing the GM pine trees:**

- (1) Reproductive structures removed in accordance with 10 (c) must be autoclaved or incinerated.
- (2) Any approved organism that develops a reproductive structure must be killed by being cut down within 14 working days of detection of the reproductive structure.
- (3) All approved organisms growing at the field test site must be killed by being cut down when they reach 8 years of age calculated from the date when embryo is clearly identifiable and is transferred to germination medium in tissue culture.
- (4) For the avoidance of doubt, the approval holder is not required to kill any non-heritable material.

**• What are the two traits the trees been gene edited for?**

On 29 May 2025 the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) transferred question 6 to Scion - New Zealand Forest Research Institute under Section 14(b)(ii) of the OIA, as the information sought is more closely connected with its functions.

**• What controls have been put in place by the EPA?**

This information can be found in Appendix 2 on pages 24 -26 of the [Environmental Risk Management Authority Decision: ERMA200479](#)

I hope this information is helpful. 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](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz)

If you have further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us via [ministerials@epa.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@epa.govt.nz). We may publish your request and our response on our website, [www.epa.govt.nz](http://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



Dr Christopher Hill

**General Manager, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms**