

chapter |

2.



A shared framework of values

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1. The choices we make in life, whether as individuals or as a nation, reflect the values we hold. Values give rise to goals, which in turn determine policies and strategies. Values are often hidden or unnamed, and when this happens there is a danger of becoming lost in a debate about strategies and losing sight of what we ultimately want to achieve. In this chapter, therefore, the Commission sets out a framework of values as a reference device to guide the processes of analysis and formulation.
2. But where do those values come from? It would be inappropriate for four people to impose their own values on the life of the nation, and we do not seek to do so. But after weeks of hearings and our many public meetings and hui around New Zealand, it appears to us that it is possible to name a set of values that many New Zealanders would recognise as things we hold in common. The Warrant establishing the Commission also implied certain values by listing various matters we were to take into account in reaching our conclusions.
3. Sharing similar values, however, does not mean that everyone will necessarily reach the same conclusions about strategies to give effect to those values. Those who appeared before the Commission had very different ideas on how to achieve similar goals such as environmental, cultural and economic well-being. But value identification goes some way to ensure congruence between goals and strategies, and to enable different groups to see their own goals more broadly, and in relationship with others.
4. We identify seven values pertinent to this Report:
 - *The uniqueness of Aotearoa/New Zealand* The environment of any country is unique, and New Zealand's is made more so by its geographical isolation, its relatively low population density, and the ecosystem, flora and fauna specific to this nation. Decisions need to be tailor-made to fit those features and circumstances which are uniquely ours.
 - *The uniqueness of our cultural heritage* The Treaty of Waitangi created a special relationship between tangata whenua (people of the land) and tangata tiriti (the settlers who came later). New Zealanders recognise the essential element of Maori heritage in the New Zealand culture of today.

- *Sustainability* The need to sustain our unique but fragile environment for generations yet to come was often and passionately mentioned by many. Tangata whenua use the word kaitiakitanga (stewardship) to describe the same concept. Any estimate of benefits and costs must include sustainability as a central criterion. An environment that is cherished and cared for is not just a survival mechanism; it is for many also a source of spiritual and cultural hope.
 - *Being part of a global family* To be geographically isolated is not to be isolationist. New Zealanders are very much world citizens in terms of travel, trade, and partnerships of knowledge and endeavour. While safeguarding those things that are uniquely ours, we also share in global developments. We live in a creative partnership with other nations, being influenced by them and yet also having the capacity to exercise leadership among them.
 - *The well-being of all* Meeting the needs of all New Zealanders requires a robust economy with equally robust systems to ensure positive educational, health and social outcomes. Economic and social goals are not mutually exclusive. They are, in fact, symbiotic. A strong economy makes possible the provision of effective educational, health and social systems, and a population that has benefited from those systems contributes in turn to a strong economy.
 - *Freedom of choice* As a nation of diverse peoples, cultures and beliefs we need to recognise such plurality by allowing for maximum freedom of choice. Freedom to make my choice, however, also means allowing others the freedom to make theirs. In a democratic nation freedom in diversity requires a flexible and cooperative spirit to ensure that as far as possible everyone's freedoms are maintained.
 - *Participation* A democratic nation requires effective systems of consultation and shared decision-making. The Commission has sought to consult with as many New Zealanders as possible, and to value the viewpoint of "the average Kiwi" as much as the viewpoint of well-resourced organisations. National policies are most likely to succeed when they arise out of processes of participation, and we hope that this Report reflects this fundamental value.
5. We invite readers to compare their own values with those we have set out above and to keep them in mind as a backdrop to this Report.



7 core values

The values in practice

To give effect to the seven core values just named, the Commission established three spheres or sets of criteria to apply when assessing potential applications of genetic modification techniques. The spheres and the relationships between them are illustrated below. While there is some overlap, the cultural, ethical and spiritual sphere broadly reflects the values of the Treaty of Waitangi, freedom of choice, and participation. The values of uniqueness and sustainability, and aspects of the value of well-being, fall within the environment and health sphere. Global family values and other aspects of well-being belong in the economic and strategic sphere.



The 3 sets of criteria