

7 July 2025

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-39786

Physicians and Scientists for Global Responsibility

By email: [Info@psgr.org.nz](mailto:Info@psgr.org.nz)

Tēnā koe

### **Request for information 2025-187**

I refer to your request for information dated 16 June 2025, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 16 June 2025. You have requested the following:

*“PSGR make a Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 request to Councillors (to be answered as one response from Councillors):*

- 1. What concerns do Councillors hear from your constituents about gene editing technologies in food and the environment?*
- 2. Have Councillors been made aware that there has been no risk assessment, economic assessment or cost-benefit assessment to assess the safety of the proposed Gene Technology Bill, including to structure some gene editing technologies and organisms completely outside of regulation?*
- 3. Have Councillors been advised that the decision to remove the precautionary principle/approach was not made based on a review of best global practice?*
- 4. Are Councillors aware that the gene edited technologies and organisms that following enactment of this Bill, that would be outside of regulation would never be monitored or declared?*
- 4. How do you feel about the potential loss of local democratic control over GMO decisions in your region?*
- 5. How might mayors collectively respond if the Gene Technology Bill overrides existing local precautionary and GMO policies without consultation (i.e. early-stage stakeholder consultation did not include elected members of TLAs)?”*

## **Greater Wellington's response follows:**

- 1. What concerns do Councillors hear from your constituents about gene editing technologies in food and the environment?*

Councillors have not heard from their constituents about gene editing technologies in food and the environment. Therefore, Greater Wellington does not hold the information requested. We are therefore refusing your request under section 17(g) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) on the basis that the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington and we have no grounds for believing that the information is either:

- (i) Held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or
- (ii) Connected more closely with the functions of another local authority, or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

- 2. Have Councillors been made aware that there has been no risk assessment, economic assessment or cost-benefit assessment to assess the safety of the proposed Gene Technology Bill, including to structure some gene editing technologies and organisms completely outside of regulation?*

Councillors have not been advised on the Gene Technology Bill by officials at Greater Wellington. Therefore, Greater Wellington does not hold the information requested. We are therefore refusing your request under section 17(g) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington.

- 3. Have Councillors been advised that the decision to remove the precautionary principle/approach was not made based on a review of best global practice?*
- 4. Are Councillors aware that the gene edited technologies and organisms that following enactment of this Bill, that would be outside of regulation would never be monitored or declared?*

Councillors have not been advised on the Gene Technology Bill by officials at Greater Wellington. Therefore, Greater Wellington does not hold the information requested. We are therefore refusing your request under section 17(g) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington.

- 4. How do you feel about the potential loss of local democratic control over GMO decisions in your region?*

This request is seeking an opinion from Greater Wellington. Therefore, Greater Wellington does not hold the information requested. We are therefore refusing your request under section 17(g) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington.

5. *How might mayors collectively respond if the Gene Technology Bill overrides existing local precautionary and GMO policies without consultation (i.e. early-stage stakeholder consultation did not include elected members of TLAs)?*

This request is seeking a speculative response from Greater Wellington. Therefore, Greater Wellington does not hold the information requested. We are therefore refusing your request under section 17(g) of the Act on the basis that the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Lian Butcher

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rōpū Taiao | Group Manager Environment Group