



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) Inc.

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MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday, 11 May 2025

Re: HOPE Inc. Raises Alarm Over Planned GM Mosquito Release

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) Inc. has expressed serious concerns regarding the impending release of genetically modified (GM) mosquitoes in Queensland.

The organization, which has a long-standing concern about the use of genetically modified organisms in food and fibre, is now focusing its attention on the potential ecological and health impacts of releasing GM mosquitoes.

"HOPE has for decades been concerned about the widespread use of genetical modification of food and fibre," says Frank Ondrus, Office Manager, HOPE Inc., "mainly around the efficacy of changing the genetic makeup of products – where these changes may bioaccumulate in the human body over time and generations". "Now, we have this issue of GM Mosquitoes!"

HOPE Inc. aligns itself with the concerns raised by the GM-Free Australia Alliance and Gene Ethics, particularly the work of Bob Phelps, regarding the proposed release.

Details of the Proposed Release

Oxitec and CSIRO are seeking approval from the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) (DIR 207) for large-scale commercial releases of millions of imported GM mosquitoes in Queensland. The stated aim of this release is to crash mosquito populations in an attempt to halt the spread of dengue fever viruses.

Concerns and Alternatives

The release highlights that since 2010, the World Mosquito Program in Queensland has successfully reduced dengue cases using a method that involves infecting mosquitoes with natural Wolbachia bacteria, which prevents them from transmitting viruses. HOPE Inc. notes that this alternative method has been effective without the potential health and environmental issues associated with GM technology.

Call to Action

HOPE Inc. urges the public to take action to oppose the release of GM mosquitoes by:

- Contacting Queensland Environment Minister Andrew Powell to call for a parliamentary inquiry into the proposal.

- Contacting their local MP and local council to express their opposition.
- Supporting the Wolbachia program as a viable alternative.
- Submitting objections, questions, and inquiries to the OGTR at ogtr@health.gov.au, especially given the delayed public consultation period.

HOPE Inc. also encourages the public to share this information with their networks to raise awareness about the issue.

Potential Ecological Impacts

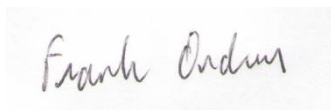
HOPE Inc. emphasizes the potential for significant ecological damage resulting from the GM mosquito release, including:

- Loss of food sources for various animals such as birds, fish, frogs, bats, and dragonflies.
- Gene flow to wild mosquitoes, potentially creating hybrids.
- Unpredictable long-term impacts on health and the environment.
- The possible development of insecticide resistance among mosquitoes.
- The necessity for repeated releases of GM varieties to suppress mosquito populations.

The organization warns that many native animals and insects are at risk due to the disruption of food sources, potentially affecting the viability, biodiversity, and ecosystems of various organisms.

HOPE Inc. insists that comprehensive ecological research, conducted independently of Oxitec, is essential before any GM mosquito releases are approved.

(Information for this media release sourced from GM Free Australia Alliance and Gene Ethics)

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Frank Ondrus". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The background is a light, textured surface.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager - HOPE Inc. | Ph: 07 4639 2135 | Email: office@hopeaustralia.org.au