

Dear Madam/Sir,

Overseas, a strong emerging trend in regulation regarding gene technology involves consistent, reliable use of well publicized citizen panels.

Examples are in the EU

<http://www.citizenspanel.eu/>

This site in the UK also has a search engine which lists recent case studies of citizens panels

<http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Citizens%27+Panels>

This is sorely lacking in the Australian scene. There is a wealth of not only concerns but understanding which exists outside of the biotech business itself which needs to be heard and which the industry itself, both in medicine and agriculture, must use to guide and even change course.

Overseas, public participation with issues of science in society is considered far too important to ignore. I believe the GT Act must incorporate an ongoing public commitment to the same. The process needs to be not only public, but established as part of every process so confidence is established. Finally, there also needs to be changes which follow through as a result of the panels and the process.

Short of this, everything in GT will be endlessly controversial and resentment will grow. This is not in the interest of the best practice of science, government or civil society, let alone business.

Thanks for your time. Please acknowledge receipt of this email submission.

Mary Gardner
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