

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000812

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Norwegian Government Commissioned Review

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Rice, Janet

Question:

Is the OGTR aware of the Norwegian Government commissioned review which notes that there have been no studies looking at the unintended impacts of ODM in plants.* The review concluded that “this poses extra challenges for the identification of potential unintended effects and thus raises knowledge gaps.”

a) Does the OGTR disagree with this analysis?

b) If yes, on what basis?

c) If no, does the OGTR think it is appropriate to deregulate this technique given the data gaps around its safety?

d) If yes to c), on what basis?

*Agapito-Tenfen, S.G. & Wikmark, O-G (2015) Current status of emerging technologies for plant breeding: Biosafety and knowledge gaps of site directed nucleases and oligonucleotide-directed mutagenesis, p. 7.

Answer:

The Gene Technology Regulator has not formed a concluded view on the regulatory status of oligo-directed mutagenesis (ODM) technology.

Any response to this question would be pre-emptive of the outcome of the current technical review of the Gene Technology Regulations 2001.